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THE SQUIRE'S DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

BY MARLTON DOWNING.

The court had convened, but there was no prisoner present, neither were there any great legal luminaries on hand to expound the intricate and mystifying points of Blackstone, yet the party gathered together were deeply interested in the case which was about to be brought before them, for they were all either judges or witnesses, and most of the latter aspired to the high dignity of the former.

This unique tribunal, self-appointed, by the way, consisted of the greater portion of the matrons and elderly maidens of a little village that nestled quietly amid the Berkshire Hills of New England.

"I declare, if it isn't just awful! And to think we, respectable people, have been associating with that Martha Preston! Even sitting beside her in meeting, all this time, and she, such a shameless hussy! Why, it makes me shiver!"

And the horrified spinster raised her two hands in air, while she rolled her cat-like eyes toward the smoky ceiling of Farmer Carter's kitchen in which the indignant females had met for the purpose (not openly avowed, however) of tearing to pieces the character of one of their neighbors, the lovely daughter of Widow Preston.

"I quite agree with you, Maria Jane," returned Mehitable Jones. "Why, she is a great deal worse than Bessy Watson, who you remember, two years ago last harvest was in trouble. She had consideration enough upon us to leave the place and go to Boston where nobody knew her and consequently no one need blush when they met her on the road."

"But this creature," interrupted Farmer Carter's wife, "is brazen enough to stay here and defy us to our very faces. I, for one, am shocked."

"So am I! So am I. So am I!" chimed in her listeners in chorus.

"But whose name is mentioned in connection with Martha's?" inquired a squeaky voice in the chimney-corner.

"Ah, there, Jerushy," replied Maria Blackburn, who seemed to be the leading spirit among these gossips, "you've asked a question that might be hard to answer, for to my certain knowledge there's been more'n one name, but they do say," and here the malicious voice of the speaker dropped to a whisper, "they do say Squire Tucker's son has visited Widow Preston's house (poor soul!) most too often."

"Squire Tucker's son! Oh, if that ain't just too awful! Who would believe it?" exclaimed the croaking maid by the fireside. "And his father, what a nice man! His wife, only dead one year last grass," and a heavy sigh escaped from the bosom of the antiquated female to whom the tender passion was supposed to be a stranger.

"The squire away in foreign parts too! It will bring his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave," responded Mehitable Jones, as she essayed to brush some moisture from the glasses of the silver-rimmed spectacles which rested upon her aquiline nose.

"When do they expect the squire back?" asked Farmer Carter's wife, who though mistress of the establishment was by no means mistress of ceremonies.

"I heard Parson Brown say last Sabbath that he was coming some time this week," answered one who had heretofore remained silent.

"Then I will tell you what we ought to do! It is our duty," declared Maria Jane Blackburn, with great decision. "That is, we will call upon Squire Tucker just as soon as he gets home and tell him how things have been going here in the village since he has been gone."

"Poor man! But who is going to be the one to send the shaft that will pierce his already wounded and bleeding heart?" inquired the lackadaisical Jerusha, (who also essayed to be poetic.)

"As I said," quickly rejoined Maria Jane, "it was a duty, and a painful one. If there is no other who will undertake the task I will perform it," and the elderly spinster drew herself up with an air of Spartan-like determination, and glared fiercely around upon her listeners.

A slight pause ensued, then Mehitable Jones asked:

"Now don't you think, Maria, that some of us should wait upon Martha Preston and request her for the sake of the morals of the community to leave the village?"

"Most assuredly! Most assuredly!" was the unanimous reply, for all seemed ready and anxious to humiliate the young woman in question.

"I think there is no better time than the present, so we'll all go at once to the widow's house," and as though the matter was settled, Mehitable Jones tied the green strings to her sunbonnet, repinned the red mantilla about her angular shoulders and was prepared to start forth upon her officious mission.



◀ THE COMING OF THE NEW YEAR. ▶

How many men who have a calendar of the year hanging beside their desks—how many of the people who can't keep house without an almanac—know that about 300 years ago a very important change was made in our reckoning of time? Up to the time of Julius Caesar, the Romans divided the year into 10 months, of very unequal lengths. One of the chief purposes of a calendar is to mark a fixed date as a beginning of a year, and to do this, it should be always at the same distance from the spring and fall equinoxes. In the time of Caesar, the science of astronomy was not very exact, and the small error of 11 minutes in the length of the year was made. In the sixteenth century the churchmen, who had a great many religious festivals, found that whereas the equinox was on March 25 when the Julian calendar was made, in 1582 it had fallen back to March 11. The great festival of the church, Easter, was thus getting back into the winter. Pope Gregory XIII came to the rescue, and after consultation with the learned of the day, issued, in October, 1582, a brief by which the date was arbitrarily advanced 10 days—and that is our present calendar. Russia, under the Greek church, did not follow this, and still keeps the old style.

The latter hitched the animal's head to a post and both entered the house as if they were sure of a welcome.

In the cosy little parlor Mrs. Preston, her daughter Martha, and Rev. Mr. Brown, the tender, benevolent, spiritual leader of the town were seated.

As the visitors appeared, the trio rose to their feet but when Martha saw who it was that accompanied the young man, it seemed as though she essayed to shrink back to avoid observation.

If such had been her intention it was frustrated by Edward's springing forward and clasping her in his arms while he exclaimed:

"See, Martha, father has not been in town

fifteen minutes but he has come to offer you his greeting."

"Yes, my daughter," remarked the squire in a cordial voice, grasping the trembling hand of the young woman. "I bestow upon you both my blessing. The letters of Edward which reached me when abroad were so full of praises of your beauty and character that I am prepared to love you. Although I could hardly realize that the little Martha Preston whom I remembered as a school-girl when I went away had grown up and become the wife of my son, yet I see that sometimes a year and a half will produce great changes."

Then to the other occupants of the room the squire extended a most hearty greeting.



SUNSHINE AND SYMPATHY FOR THE SHUT INS.

will, and have His blessed purposes fulfilled in our lives. And who knows but what in these coming days, before the Christmas tide shall come again, the gates may swing wide open, and the longed for release come to some suffering, pinioned soul? This year, too, may bring the time when your discipline shall be complete, and God will restore you to health and strength again. Whatever comes, Our Father knows best, and we will rest on that, believing in His love. "God hath bound thy trouble upon thee, with a desire to try thee, and with purposes to reward and crown thee. These cords thou must not break; and therefore lie thou down gently, and suffer the Hand of God to do what He pleases."

"Consider this, my first letter, as a timid plea for admittance to what I am sure must be a very happy family. I may more clearly define my position when I say that I am a 'Shut In'; one who has not been one hundred yards from the table at which he writes this letter for nearly one year. When this I said you will concede the fact that I am indeed a 'Shut In.' I must commend the delicate and feeling way that Southern Girl deals with the sentiments of those heroes who wore both the blue and the gray. 'Tis a subject that older (I will not say wiser) heads have handled with less conservatism. May I also add a word concerning Moon of Leaves? I am greatly pleased with the tone and general wording of her letter. Methinks she must be quite a brilliant conversationalist and if not deemed presumptuous would ask that she exchange a letter with me through the medium of our dear Aunt Minerva, and give me the origin of her *nom de plume*. I will be adjudged a self-appointed critic. If I don't please to enclose reasons for this writing. I am desirous to enclose subscription to your sparkling little journal and hope for, and am sure, that many a dreary and lonely hour will be cheered by perusing the bright messages from my several cousins. Your dutiful nephew, SOUTHERN, No. 2."

"I want to help all that need, for I can fully sympathize with them, as I have been an invalid for near 14 years, up to two years ago, a 'Shut In,' but am thankful to say my general health the past two years has been better, that I can sometimes get to church and Sabbath-school. I live in the country a mile from the church, and 5 miles from P. O. I see much for and against novels. I am an old woman, 60 years old, I must own, I enjoy reading some novels. I read out to my children, or have done so, ever since I have been an invalid, and try to have such as will benefit and not injure. Some do not approve of fairy tales. I rather read 'Grimm's Fairy Tales,' than have my children read Shakespeare, 'Arabian Nights,' and such. MIDDLE GEORGIA."

If children never read anything worse than 'Grimm's Fairy Tales,' they will not be likely to become very much depraved. I could never see any harm in fairy tales, and agree with you in thinking them safe and pleasant reading for children.

Dear Auntie and Cousins:—We get COMFORT regularly now, and I, for one, am glad you've given us a separate column, so we may not disturb a few who dislike an invalid's monotonous ways. I say a few because a great many, I think nearly all, enjoy an occasional chat with us, for quite well do I recall the peaceful hours derived through God's spirit, from my visits and chats with the paupers, and more particularly, when I think of one poor boy on his dying couch, whom, in my humble efforts, I had tried to instruct before he became ill. Although the kindness has been "Only a cup of cold water in His name," how good we feel for having given it. Ah, yes, "Their works do follow them always"—sin, or righteousness, and gives us peace, or uneasiness of mind. Dozens of letters of true sympathy have been written me from the cousins, and it has cheered me very much indeed; write again, cousins, let me hear from all. Auntie, the intent of this letter is to thank every one for their letters, papers, etc.

"I am stronger now, and we are being blessed in many ways. Please allow me a brief chat with some of my invalid sisters, who say, 'reading the Bible and religious literature keeps them sad, always thinking of death,' etc. Dear cousins, this good, 'holy Bible, book divine,' is more comfort than you know of, if accompanied by God's Spirit. I can sympathize with you, I didn't use to love it, and its readings always, as you say, suggested the thoughts of death; but I am thankful now for such blessed reminders, yet so gentle and comforting in their golden pages, pointing out the way of salvation, and escape from everlasting, yes, never-ending torment which we are sure to come to, if kept out of mind as well as God, in this world. If you cannot read much, like myself, send for a neighbor's 'little chatterbox,' who may play about on the bed and cheer you very much. ANNIE E. MOORE, Washington, Ark."

I am glad to hear, from so many dear friends, that our "Sunshine Corner" is enjoyed and appreciated. Let us make it so bright and attractive by our pleasant talks together, that all the cousins will be glad to come from their own corner and gather around ours, where there is always sunshine. Those who are now well and strong do not know how soon sickness and suffering may come upon them, and while they have health and strength, should do all they can for those who are not so blessed.

Dear Auntie:—May I come again to thank you and the cousins for your kindness. Now my dear COMFORT cousin, you who want to deprive the poor "Shut Ins" and invalid cousins from coming to our dear Auntie and asking for a little comfort through the columns of our paper, don't you think you are a little too hard? I do. Does not the great book of books tell us, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," and is that doing as you would like to be done by? You would not like for one of your friends, when you began to tell them something, rise up and leave you. Oh no, that would hurt your feelings. Don't you suppose these poor sick people who are deprived of the sweets of life have some feeling too? You do not know what pleasure the sympathy and kindness of others give to those poor afflicted ones, or you would not want them to stand back and look on. I would be pleased to hear from any of the cousins who wish to lend a helping hand to the needy. May you all enjoy health and happiness to the sincere wish of your cousin, DOLLIE.

"Will some one who has books to spare (good stories, poems or any good reading) and would like to send comfort to a poor invalid on a lonely farm in Dak., please direct to me and I will see that she gets them safely. Mrs. LIDA JAYNES Wesley, S. Dak."

Dear Aunt Minerva:—May I write a few lines to the dear suffering "Shut Ins" and cousins? Although not one of your family as a member, yet the bond of sympathy unites me to you. Having been an invalid for 4 years I know and can understand their feelings. Lone Star's letter and M. V. I. Merriell's remarks have made me feel as if I should like to say a few words. Please, dear ones, do not let any of the lonely ones know you do not wish for their tales of woe and trials and tribulations. You may be depriving some of their only comfort by so doing. Have you ever known what a joy it is to a lonely suffering heart to confide in one whom she knows has sympathy for her? Have we not suffered that we might be able to understand how to sympathize with other suffering

nes, and how can we do so when we do not know their feelings, and how can we know their feelings if they do not tell them to us. Would Jesus turn away and say, "I have suffered myself, tell me something more pleasant and diverting than this." No! He says, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that He might be able to enter into the feelings of each one as they come to Him for comfort and rest. How true it is there are very few in good health who have much sympathy or know how to sympathize, and to suffering one the thought that "no one cares" makes the burden harder to bear than the actual pain. Ask yourselves these questions, and do as Jesus would do. "Bear ye one another's burdens," and so fulfill the law of Christ, I pray God's richest blessings on you and your work and may you and the large family "as the beloved of the Lord dwell in safety by Him."

Yours in loving sympathy,
Miss REBECCA E. SMITH,
424 Lincoln Ave., Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, O.

"If you please, I will take my seat right here in this corner set apart for 'Shut Ins' only; and how nice to be all by ourselves. Although I am not entirely shut in now, I do not have the privilege of doing as I once did. I was confined to my bed 3 years with spinal disease and if I had not practiced just what Maria Jones preaches, I would not be writing to you. But the dear Saviour had yet a work for me to do, and spared my life. My favorite physicians were Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet and Dr. Merryman. I feel so grateful to be able to walk again, that I say with every step, 'Oh praise the Lord, praise Him all ye people.' In sickness and trouble we should always maintain a cheerfulness just as far as we can."

A. L. PORTER, So. Monterey, Mich.
"All round the year the trusting soul
May find the word of promise whole;
The flight of time, unknown above,
Breaks not our Father's boundless love.
Unbroken be the tranquil light
That folds our lesser sphere,
As ever pure, and calm, and bright
All round the year."

Names of those needing help and sympathy:
Fannie Nelson, New Salem, Rink Co., Texas.
Miss Emily M. Wheaton, North Branford, Conn.
A. A. Norton, Odin, Ills.
Mrs. Eveline Fay, 405 No. 5th St., East Saginaw, Mich.
Mattie L. Martin, Frederick, Ga.
Madison L. Nash, Tyro, Miss.

With kind wishes and loving thoughts,
AUNT MINERVA, (Care of COMFORT.)



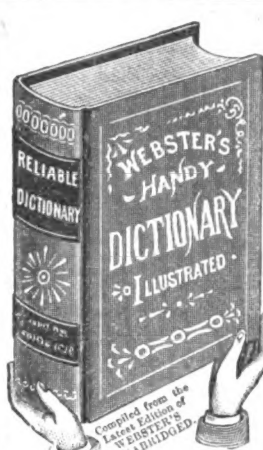
NEW YORK BY GASLIGHT.

THE CRIMES OF A GREAT CITY.—WHAT THE MATRON DOES AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS FOR THE FEMALE PRISONERS.

Until recently all the female prisoners in New York have been received and attended to by men. But a recent enactment has provided an improvement by adding a female inspector to the regular force. When it is considered that many of the female prisoners reach the station house under the influence of liquor and that every prisoner must be searched before going to a cell, the propriety of such an office is at once apparent and the wonder is that it was not instituted long ago. The arrests among women are not all confined to outcasts but include many who, while not within the pale of reputable society, are still somewhat above that class, to say nothing of the numerous instances where the prisoners are merely suspects and who cannot be properly included among the criminal class till their guilt is proven. There are occasional instances also of visiting females indulging somewhat too freely in the cup that cheers, and landing quite unexpectedly in a station house. These cases are not so rare as one might suppose nor are their victims particularly criminal. There is also a department for lodging homeless women, and of course they are necessarily under some inspection. The "lodging" cannot be called either comfortable or luxurious, the extent of the provision merely affording a bare plank on which to sleep. Some of these unfortunates come to the lodging room with a good dram inside taken to keep out the cold. In the heat of the room this soon has an effect and it is not an unfrequent occurrence to have a full fledged riot in progress before the night is over. It is horrible to consider how dreadfully exposed some of these women are and to what stress the matron is put to sew their clothing so that they will be respectable when they reach court. When they are injured or sick they are taken to a private room and no one goes near them but the matron and the surgeon.



It is hard to understand why the police oppose the appointment of matrons, but they do. It is possibly because they have become so disgusted with their experiences that they have no time for useless sentiment; but the matron is a useful institution and she has probably come to stay.



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Dear heart.	Happy new year.	Le Petre's hornpipe.	Petronella.	Smith's hornpipe.
De banjo an.	Harp that once.	Light artillery.	Polly wally doodle.	Snuff-box waltz.
Devil's dream.	Heel and toe. polka.	Liverpool hornpipe.	Polly wally fancy.	Soldier's joy.
Drunk sailor.	Hey, daddy.	Lord's my shepherd.	Prince or peasant.	Spade dance.
Durand's hornpipe.	Highland fling.	Madrigalle, La.	Quitting party.	Speed the plough.
Eight-hand reel.	Home, sweet home.	Mary of Argyle.	Ricket's hornpipe.	Spirits of France.
Erminie gavotte.	Hull's victory.	Minuet.	Robin Ruff.	Sun of my soul.
Erminie lullaby.	Imperial, L.	Miss McLeod's reel.	Rocket gallop.	Tempest, The.
First love redowa.	Irishman's heart.	Money Mack.	Rory O'More.	Tempest, La.
Four-hand reel.	Irish trot.	Mother's song.	Rosbud reel.	There is rest.
Fritz's lullaby.	Jakie's hornpipe.	My pretty pearl.	Rustic reel.	Thunder hornpipe.
Gavotte de Vestrie.	Jesus, lover of my.	Now, was I wrong?	Red lion hornpipe.	Tired.
German, The.	John Anderson.	Oh, carry me back.	Rock of ages.	Uncle Dan's.
German redowa.	Jordan is a land.	Old oaken bucket.	Roska, La.	Uncle Sam's farm.
German waltz.	Land of the lake.	Old rosin, the beau.	Russian march.	Up the hills.
Gintana waltz.	Lancashire clog.	Old zip clog.	Sailors set on shore.	Virginia reel.
Girl I left behind.	Land of sweet Erin.	Only.	St. Patrick's day.	Watchman, tell us.
Go to the D—	Larry O'Gaff.	On the banks.	Scottish dance.	Watch on Rhine.
		Opera reel.	Shells of ocean.	White cockade.
		Our first and last.	Sicilienne, The.	Where many mansions.
		Over the water.	Sicilian circle.	Wind that shakes.
		Oyster river.	Silent night.	Within a mile.
		Perplexity.	Six-hand reel.	Zulma.

For this month only we will send this lot of music free to each new yearly 25-cent subscriber to COMFORT.

MORSE & CO., Augusta, Maine.



STOCKS UP.

The Millionaires of New York.

JAY GOULD.

HOW THE GREAT AMERICAN FINANCIER LIVES.—HIS DAILY WORK, AND HOW HE HAS AMASSED HIS FORTUNE.

Jay Gould, the great king of Wall Street, whose fame has filled both the old world and the new, is not a remarkable person so far as his personal appearance is concerned. There is none of the striking individuality in his face that was so prominent a feature of the late Henry Ward Beecher, and but for the intense interest that surrounds his every movement, he would attract but little attention in the hurrying throngs that surge to and fro in the vicinity of Wall and Broad Streets, where stands amid a perfect network of telegraph wires the building of the New York Stock Exchange.

He is considerably undersized, probably not more than 5 feet, 5 inches, and is a light delicately built man. He is in the neighborhood of five and fifty, and his once dark hair is strongly marked with gray. A heavy beard covering the lower part of his face gives him a look of muscular strength that is greatly deceiving, for his weight is not much over 120 lbs. The top of his head however, shows where his real strength lies; the forehead being wide and deep, the top of the skull showing an area that accounts for the wonderful brain underneath. A straight nose

if he doesn't, that more fortunes are lost in a day in Wall Street than are made in a year. And in the nature of things it must be so. In no other business would men engage without previous knowledge except in speculating. And when they fail they cry fraud, and call men like Gould thieves, robbers and pillagers. As a matter of fact, Mr. Gould has but little to do with the control of the market, and has all he can do to manage his own vast interests.

Statements purporting to come from Mr. Gould regarding the state of the market can invariably be put down as false. He rarely divulges his plans, and is notoriously a silent man. In fact so marked is this habit, that few men are seen in conversation with Mr. Gould on his daily ride to and from his home in Irvington, and his bitter experience has taught him that his lightest remark is liable to be misconstrued, and he is exceedingly careful in his conversation even with his intimates.

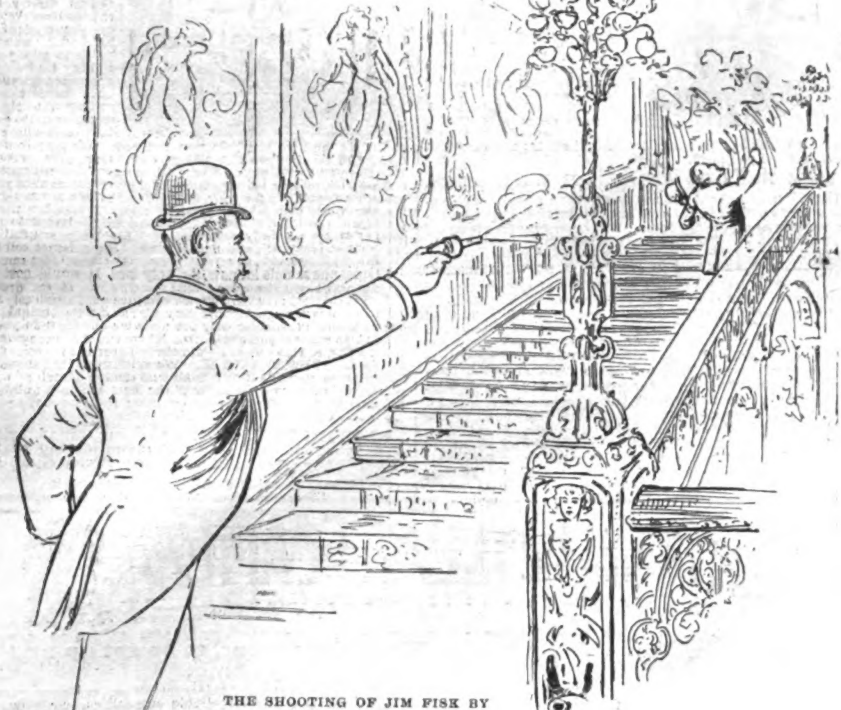
Mr. Gould's home—the one that is really his home—overlooks the beautiful Hudson and is situated in the charming village of Irvington, the home of Washington Irving, and the scene of Major Andre's capture during the Revolution. All around the vicinity are historical associations and romantic memories. His home is almost feudal in its aspect, standing as it does on a high bank commanding a view of the Hudson, its famous palisades and its picturesque highlands.

Around the Gould's house are spacious grounds given to the cultivation of rare and beautiful flowers. Mr. Gould's green houses are famous even in this region of magnificent horticultural possessions. This is Mr. Gould's hobby, and during the lifetime of Mrs. Gould, much of his time was spent with her in the development of their floral treasures. The green houses are open at all times to visitors, and are rarely without appreciative spectators. The house itself is built of white granite and resembles an old



RUINED.

time baronial castle. It was built at an enormous cost by a banker who went down in the mad whirl of Wall Street, and came into the hands of Mr. Gould at merely a nominal figure. It is quietly but expensively furnished, and has an air of quiet comfort throughout. Mr. Cyrus W. Field is a neighbor of Mr. Gould's, as is Mr. John D. Rockefeller of Standard Oil fame. Although Mr. Gould's means are ample he has never, like the Vanderbilts, had any social aspirations. His home life is one of the most



THE SHOOTING OF JIM FISK BY EDWARD S. STOKES.

somewhat larger than usual, and a pair of piercing black eyes complete the picture of a man who in the short time he has spent in life has probably attracted more attention, and has caused more discussion than almost any other man in this country, with possibly the exception of General Grant. Like Grant he has the same stolid demeanor in the face of trying situations. Nothing seems to ruffle the calm impenetrable manner that marks the great financier. I remember on one occasion he called for the footing of a certain account. The book-keeper gave the figures only to discover a few moments later that his calculations were \$100,000 out of the way, and Mr. Gould had left the office! By good luck the clerk over took him in the office of his favorite broker with a slouch hat drawn over his eyes and his feet perched on a railing. "I made a mistake, Mr. Gould," panted the clerk, "the amount should have been \$100,000

simple and unpretentious imaginable; during his wife's lifetime he found his sole recreation in her society. No scandal has ever touched Mr. Gould's domestic life, though his association with the notorious Jim Fisk exposed him to many temptations, but through it all he emerged with a spotless reputation. In the death of his wife two years ago he suffered an irreparable loss, and has never been the same man since. Many stories are told of his wife's unselfish devotion to him, and during all the exciting scenes through which he has passed she was always by his side to soothe his tired nerves and give him renewed strength and courage. Mobs have been before the Gould mansion in New York, and crowds of infuriated men have besieged his office in Wall St. The only sign of nervousness he ever gave was a violent headache, which his wife was wont to drive away with gentle ministrations.

Mr. Gould's family at present consists of his daughter Nellie, who is now a young lady, his son Edward and his married son George, with the latter's two sons. It is related of Miss Nellie Gould while on a visit to the Treasury at Washington that the custodian unaware of his visitor's identity handed her a package containing a million dollars, and seemed to enjoy her apparent pleasure. "When you go home," said he, "you can brag to your friends that you had as much as a million dollars in your hand at one time." As her father is worth a hundred times that amount the experience was not so novel as the worthy custodian imagined.

In the winter Mr. Gould removes to New York, but the first sign of spring sees him back to his country home. Almost any afternoon he may be encountered on the local train that runs to Tarrytown. On the whole Mr. Gould cannot be considered a happy man. "He that multiplieth riches multiplieth cares," says the Good Book, and Mr. Gould is no exception. He cannot find pleasure in society so much as he is stared at, and his every word, no matter how commonplace, is eagerly seized and commented upon. If by any hook or crook it can be construed as to having any commercial significance, the opportunity is immediately seized upon, much to the regret of people acting thus hastily, as it frequently happens. As no man likes to be the innocent cause of suffering Mr. Gould is perforce obliged to seek his own counsel, and the pleasure that is derived from contact with one's fellowmen is in a great measure denied to the richest man in the world.

The next "Man of Millions" to be sketched in COMFORT's series, will be that gentleman renowned for his benevolence and charity, John D. Rockefeller, of Standard Oil Co. fame, and followed each month by others of no less consequence in the business world.

PARAGON, Indiana, Oct. 12, 1891.

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| 1 Cluster Bachelor's Buttons 7 in. high. | 1 Spray Forget-me-nots 7 inches high. |
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FEBRUARY 1892.

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Chapter I.

In the spring the young man's fancy
Lightly turns to thoughts of love.

—Tennyson.

WHEN Howard Ross met Katharine Benham one summer he proceeded to fall violently in love with her. And she was well worthy his love, or, for the matter of that, of any man's. She was tall and although slight in build, she was strong and full of a love for fun and of all the pleasures the summer time and the country afforded. It was a great pleasure to him to play tennis

with her, for they were both active and they played well. Nor did he enjoy much less the long walks they sometimes took when they would wander off through the woods or past smiling farms, or would climb hills that they might enjoy together the views stretched before them. It happened that Howard was able that summer to be free from business and its cares for a long time, and he congratulated himself that chance had brought him so pleasant a companionship. So his love grew and he was happy. And he felt none of the pain that love is said to sometimes hold for its victims. He was young and hopeful.

It was plain to him, too, he thought, that she took almost equal pleasure in his company that he did in hers. He was not sure yet that she loved him quite as he wished to be loved by the woman who was to be his wife. But this pleased him. He would not have been glad to find her forward or willing to show that she had given her love before it was asked for. At all events, she, with apparent pleasure, accepted all of his many invitations and accompanied him whenever he wanted her to. And that was often.

For his amusement he had made some study of palmistry and he believed, whether rightly or not that in the shape of the hand and its lines he could read character. Once he examined Katharine's hand.

"What a beautiful hand yours is!" he exclaimed almost involuntarily.

"Indeed?" she answered laughing.

"You are very flattering."

"But it is," he responded. "See your fingers—how tapering they are. That means you are artistic and can appreciate the beautiful."

"Oh," she said demurely. "I suppose I am; but am I not sensible, too?"

"Yes," he answered as he pursued his examination. "You are very practical. You are not likely to make any very serious mistakes."

"Now you are not so flattering," she returned.

"Oh yes I am," he went on. "Surely a woman ought to be sensible and practical—that is, a woman who is going to make a man happy and a contented husband."

She made no comment and then half withdrew her hand as though she thought it well to change the subject. Then she turned her hand over, however, and showing him the palm asked him what he saw there. She was half amused and wholly interested.

He pointed out to her the foundations and the lines and told her what they indicated.

"There is your head line," he went on. "You can see for yourself how deep it is and how clearly it is defined. Yes, you have a good head."

"Oh thank you," she responded. "But my heart line—what does that tell you?"

"Just what I thought it would," he said with enthusiasm. "Your heart is deep and true and strong. You could not flirt if you wanted to. When you give your heart you will give it fully and without reserve. The man who would trifle with you after seeing your heart line there would be a fool or a rascal!"

"Indeed!" she said, a little offended that he could even intimate that any man could trifle with her. Then she withdrew her hand and closing it tight held it where he could not see it.

"I have told you only what I saw," he explained.

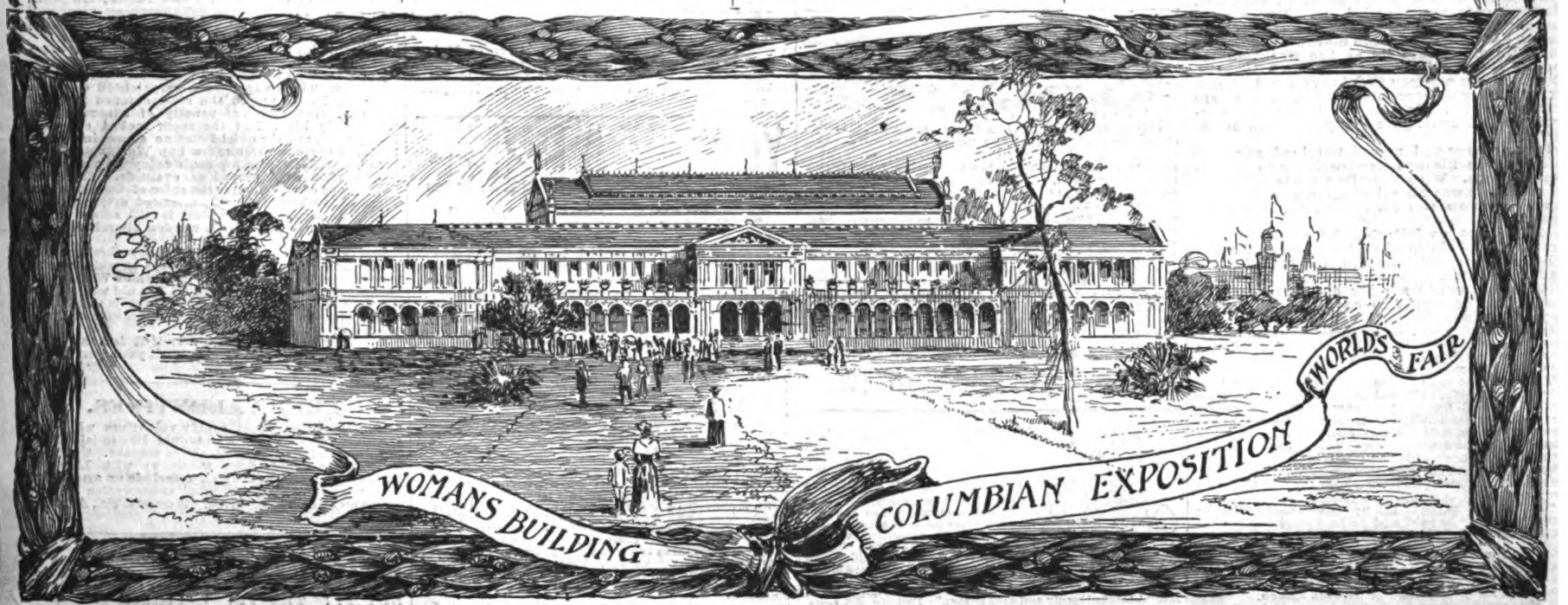
Then their talk ran to other things, and presently she spoke of others in the country whose love affairs seemed to

be going on rapidly and she spoke with some severity in regard to them.

"They meet here in the country and they have a good time," she said, "and they fancy they are in love. They ought to wait, at least, until the winter and the cold have come."

After that he could not speak at once he thought.

So the summer came to an end, and they returned to the city. Ross was attentive still, and, indeed, found his only pleasure while attending upon Katharine. He loved her—he knew that; but still he did not tell her so. He was not lacking in enterprise, nor was he lacking in faith and belief in himself. Still, he was reasonably modest and he forced himself to be patient. A little delay would not hurt his suit, he thought.



But St. Valentine's Day—that day sacred to those who love—that day in which so many lovers have told of their worship, came near. He would take advantage of its coming, he told himself. So, although he was not a poet, he sat himself down and wrote a little verse in which he spoke proudly of his love and his hopes, and only hinted at his fears. It was a simple thing; but his heart was in it. Then he took the piece of cardboard upon which he had copied it and had it prettily decorated that it might be a worthy messenger.

Howard Ross was not much afraid that his affection was not returned and it was with happy confidence that he went on the evening of the day after St. Valentine's Day to call upon Katharine Benham. She was in; but she received him coldly. He could not mistake the meaning of her manner, he thought, and he was hurt and crushed. He found it difficult to say anything of greater importance than that the weather was fine or that he thought that it might soon rain. She talked but little, too. After a silence which had continued until it was almost embarrassing she said suddenly: "Yesterday was St. Valentine's Day."

"Yes," he assented.

"And I received such a lot of valentines," she went on. "Shall I show them to you? They may amuse you."

She had received a great many and as she brought them to him he took them and looked them over hastily. Some were handsome ones, sent in decorated boxes, while some were simpler. These all spoke of the admiration their senders had for her. Some few were funny or meant to be humorous. It was evident that Katharine was a favorite of St. Valentine. His own was not among the number.

"These are not all," he said as he reached the last one.

"Those are all I care to notice or ever to see again," she returned with angry vehemence. He thought he understood. He rose abruptly and with a muttered "Goodbye," he left the room and the house.

His pride was outraged. He could not quarrel with her that she had declined his proffered love; that was her privilege. If she did not love him it was right that she should tell him so, or that she should show him that she did not. But he did not know why she should have shown him in such an angry way that she was offended; he did not know why she should have been offended at all.

Howard Ross would have been wiser had he sought from Katharine a frank explanation, but he was very angry. It may be that it would have been more creditable to him had he been less willing to take a dismissal and to think himself defeated; but Katharine's manner told him enough, he thought. A man who would persevere after such a rebuff he would think lacking in self-respect. He would give no woman any unwished-for love. It was ended.

He wearily picked up a book which he had read with great delight only a few months ago and read with a sigh the following lines:

My heart is chilled and my pulse is slow,
But often and often will memory go
Like a blind child lost in a waste of snow,
Back to the days when I loved you so,
The beautiful long ago!

My heart is heavy, my heart is old,
And that proves dross which I counted gold.
I watch no longer your curtains fold,
The window is dark and the night is cold,
And the story forever told!

CHAPTER II

A STRANGE DISCOVERY.

The dearest hope of Howard Ross was killed; but he was resolute and strong and he would not yield to despair. It would be his fate, he felt, to go on loving Katharine Benham forever. He could not help that, nor did he wish to. Life promised to be very empty for him; but he was determined to make the best he could of it.

He threw himself, heart and soul, into the business into which he had entered on his return from the country the autumn before. He worked hard, his one immediate hope being to find himself at bed time so fatigued that he would at once fall into deep and dreamless sleep.

So he went on through all the spring. He prospered, as one must who worked as he worked and when summer came he would have been well able to take another long vacation; but he could not bear to even think of being in the country. That would have been torture.

The long hot summer days found him always at his desk, and the succeeding fall and the winter came and there was no change.

He had forgotten nothing. Katharine Benham was as dear to him as ever. Whatever other success had come to him, he had not succeeded in making himself long less for her and her companionship.

He was strong, and his hard work and close application had had no bad effect upon his health. Sometimes he wished it would. Sometimes he felt that he would be glad if he could only fall asleep and sleep until his heart was cold.

The winter grew old. St. Valentine's Day was coming soon again. When the calendar told him this he smiled a little sadly as he realized how differently he looked forward to it. A year before he had been all hope; now he was dead. The day would be full of bitter memories and regret for him.

To his annoyance business became very dull. He would have been glad to work even harder; but it was not to be. Then he decided to have some desirable alterations made in his office. He had carpenters called in. Desks were moved; partitions were torn down. His own heavy desk had not been moved for many a day. He stood idly by as the workmen removed the partition against which it had stood. There between the side of the desk and the wooden wall were some papers. These were handed to him. Most of them were unimportant; but his heart gave a leap as he saw one of them.

It was a large and now dirt-stained envelope addressed in his own hand-writing to Katharine Benham. With trembling hands he opened it, and there was his valentine of a year before. And to-morrow was St. Valentine's Day come again!

With heart so full that he could scarcely breathe he sat down where he could and wrote a little note in which he told how his valentine had been lost; but that now he sent it and the little verse would say for him then what he would have been glad to have it say the year before or at any time.

In the morning—St. Valentine's Day morning—he received a valentine. It had but one word; but that was the sweetest he had ever read.

"Come!" it said.

Then when he called upon Katharine she told him, how the year before she had received valentines from her friends and her acquaintances and from people she cared for not at all; but from him, for whom she cared so much, nothing had come at all. She was disappointed, and then she was angry because some one had sent her a cruel one laughing at her love. That was the one she did not show him. Then he had left her so abruptly, and for a year she too had been very unhappy.

"But we will make it all up to one another in the years to come," he said, and as he kissed her she repeated these words from an old song:

"My true love hath my heart and I have his,
By just exchange one to the other given.
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a better bargain driven.
My true love hath my heart and I have his."

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ONE NUGGET of Pure Gold weighing Eleven (11) Pounds, value \$3,120, recently picked up in this region. (See N. Y. Financial and Mining Record.) **A DIAMOND** from this section now owned by Col. HENRY DEMING, of Harrisburg, worth \$2,500. Rubies, Garnets and Aqua-Marines.

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Every Claim Holder stands the chance of making just such marvelous finds. **Forty Thousand Dollars** in Gold was taken in five months from the edge of a piece of swamp land, (see N. Y. Sun, Sunday, June 7th, 1891), by man named Smalley and 3 men.

BOOK OF INSTRUCTIONS giving Location, Finds, Values, Assayer's Reports, Objects of the Company, How to Obtain Claims and Full Particulars on Mining sent FREE.

Free Claims will not be given away much longer. Write immediately if you want a fortune. Reliable Agents of standing and integrity wanted.

NORTH CAROLINA GOLD-MINING CO., 11 Park Row, New York.
Hon. ALONZO B. CORNELL, Ex-Governor of the State of New York, President.



This excellent variety is distinguished from all others by its large stiff stalks, as shown in the engraving, standing up like a tree without support of any kind. It bears very abundantly of large, bright red tomatos, very smooth, and of fine flavor; it is extremely early and entirely free from rot; the leaves are very curly and of a very dark green, almost black, making the plant very ornamental as well as useful.

FINCH'S EVERGREEN CUCUMBER
A very handsome variety of superior quality, firm and crisp, of a dark green color, growing from 10 to 12 inches in length, and immensely productive.

FINCH'S SURE HEAD CABBAGE
Is all head and sure to head. Very uniform in size, firm and fine in texture, excellent in quality, and a good keeper. Alfred Ross, of Penn Yan, N. Y., grew a head which weighed 6 1/2 pounds.

"I will send a Packet each of Tomato, Cucumber and Cabbage, with my Illustrated Catalogue, for only 25 cents in Silver or 28 cents in Stamps."

FIVE CINNAMON VINES FREE
This rapid growing Vine, with its beautiful heart-shaped leaves, glossy green peculiar foliage, and delicate white blossoms, emitting a delicious cinnamon fragrance, will grow from 10 to 30 feet in a single season, and for covering Arbors, Screens and Verandas is without a rival. I will send 5 BULBS FREE, and postpaid, to every person sending me 25 cents for the above Tree Tomato Collection; the bulbs will produce 5 Beautiful Vines exactly the same in every respect as I have been selling for One Dollar. Address plainly

FRANK FINCH, (Box O) CLYDE, N. Y.

Every person sending SILVER for this collection will receive extra a packet of the Mansfield Tomato (also known as the Prize) which has been grown over nine feet in height, bearing fruit of good quality, weighing from one to two pounds each.

MANSFIELD TREE TOMATO GIVEN AWAY

Mr. Finch is perfectly reliable and trustworthy. —Ed

OUR MAGNETIC FOOT BATTERIES challenge the world for any potency which will equal them for keeping your feet warm. These foot batteries remove all aches and pains from feet and limbs, cause a feeling of new Life and Vigor equal to the days of youth. Think of the luxury of Warm Feet all winter in all weather. These Magnetic Batteries increase the flow of blood, vitalize it, and cause a most delightful feeling the moment your feet rest upon these powerful Magnetic Inssoles. Every pair gives comfort and satisfaction. If you keep your feet warm you cannot catch cold. What's the use of suffering from those tired, all-gone, worn out feelings? A pair of our Magnetic Foot Batteries will act like a charm on your blood, and give you a sensation of warmth and vigor at once. Try a pair of them quick, \$1.00, or three pair for \$2.00, any size, by mail. Send for our book, "A Plain Road to Health," FREE.

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6 Central Music Hall, CHICAGO, ILL.

IMPORTED CONCERT FLUTE.
A beautiful, rich toned instrument, producing soft, delightful music. You can learn to play at once, even though entirely ignorant of music. The notes are marked and the music we send with it is numbered in like manner, instead of being printed in notes. You can learn one of the easy pieces in a few minutes. A strong, durable instrument; will last a lifetime. Elegantly finished. Cannot get out of order. We send with it a lot of music numbered as explained above. Perfect satisfaction guaranteed. Send at once, and in the Concert Flute you will have "A thing of beauty and a joy forever."

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YOU GET A PRIZE
Whether FIRST or LAST
If You Read THIS Rebus!

U R W

To the first person sending the above rebus before Saturday, April 30th 1892; to the one giving the next correct answer, \$100; to the third \$50, and to the next 15 persons sending in the correct answer we will give \$5 to each.

To the person sending in the last correct answer we will give \$100 in Gold to the next to the last, \$50; to the next \$25, and to the next 15 persons (should there be so many who send in the correct answer) \$5 to each. With your answer send 25c. cash, postal note, or 30c. in stamps for a subscription to our Illustrated 16 page Paper, The American Fireside, worth a dollar a year. Our May issue will announce the result of the contest, with names and addresses of the winners. We have given away over \$100,000 in prizes and premiums to our subscribers in the past three years and now have over 500,000 Circulation. You are Wise if you solve this rebus and send an answer at once. Write your answer and name and address plainly, and enclose subscription money to

THE AM. FIRESIDE, Wash. & Sussex Sts., Jersey City, N. J.

FREE VALENTINES.

We have some sweet pretty valentines which we are giving away to all who would like to take COMFORT on trial for the next three months. They are the regular *capita davis* made up with Lace and Lithograph work, and we also include an assortment of comics. Send 6c. for trial subscription and we mail valentine package free. MORSE & Co., Augusta, Maine.

Blind Luck. A game in which a child dangles the mathematician.

BUY IT! TRY IT! Sent postpaid for 10 cents. P. O. BOX 2846, NEW YORK.

SOME NOTES ON FEBRUARY.

SUGGESTED BY OUR TITLE PAGE.

The fourteenth of February is the day devoted to that patron saint of lovers, St. Valentine. The origin of this ancient custom comes to us from England where St. Valentine's day is observed with even greater enthusiasm than here. Valentine himself was an ancient Roman Bishop much distinguished for his many noble traits of character, and early for his great interest in young people. He was beginning to taste the sweets of love's happy dream. As in every case of this kind, mischievous people have contrived to burlesque the significance of St. Valentine's day, and the consequence is the introduction of those horrid caricatures, the comic valentine. Nothing can be in worse taste than the sending of these savage pictures, and I would advise all my friends to beware of the practice; it can rarely be done with safety, and the pain thus inflicted is not soon forgotten.

On the other hand, the sending of a pretty valentine is one of the pleasantest ways of declaring an interest in the recipient. Many a bashful swain has found escape from his embarrassment through this delightful channel, and the first tender awakening to a new passion has been revealed by the delicate tracery with its bewitching words of sweetness. It forms one of the garden spots of life, and many a heart dates its happiness from the fourteenth of February.

St. Valentine's day has also been a great favorite with the poets. Among the first to canonize the lover's patron saint was Shakespeare, who has in turn been followed by nearly every prominent writer since. Books have been written and stories told of St. Valentine ever since the beginning of the Christian Era, and his admirers grow and multiply every day. It is the day sacred to the divine passion.

But the true proper ceremony of St. Valentine's day was the drawing of a kind of lottery, followed by ceremonies not much unlike what is generally called the game of forfeits. Misson, a learned traveler, of the early part of the last century, gives apparently a correct account of the principal ceremonial of the day. "On the eve of St. Valentine's day," he says, "the young folks in England and Scotland, by a very ancient custom, celebrate a little festival. An equal number of maids and bachelors get together; each writes their true or some feigned name upon separate billets, which they roll up, and draw by way of lots, the maids taking the men's billets, and the men the maids'; so that each of the young men lights upon a girl that he calls his valentine, and each of the girls upon a young man whom she calls hers. By this means each has two valentines; but the man sticks faster to the valentine that has fallen to him than to the valentine to whom he has fallen. Fortune having thus divided the company into so many, the valentines give balls and treats to their mistresses, wear their billets several days upon their bosoms or sleeves, and this little sport often ends in love."

"A forward Miss in the 'Connoisseur,' a series of essays published in 1754-56, thus adverts to other notions with respect to the day: 'Last Friday was Valentine's Day, and the night before, I got five bay-leaves, and pinned four of them to the four corners of my pillow, and the fifth to the middle; and then if I dreamt of my sweetheart, Betty said we should be married before the year was out. But to make it more sure, I boiled an egg hard, and took out the yolk and filled it with salt; and when I went to bed, ate it, shell and all without speaking or drinking after it. We also wrote our lovers' names upon bits of paper, and rolled them up in clay, and put them into water; and the first that rose was to be our valentine. Would you think it? Mr. Blossom was my man. I lay abed and shut my eyes all the morning, for I would not have seen another man before him for all the world.'

February is also entitled to the distinction of having witnessed the birth of George Washington, the Father of his country. Within the brief period of its existence this country has produced more than its share of eminent men, but historians agree that in point of public influence, love of his country, and magnificent achievements, Washington stands without a parallel.

Among the greatest characters Washington stands unique for the purity of his purpose, his spotless integrity and unselfish devotion to the cause of liberty and equality. Himself an aristocrat and slave holder, Washington early realized the horrors of the system, and resolved to have no further part in slavery so far as he was personally concerned.

But little is really known of Washington's early life, and we are indebted to the fertile imagination of his favorite biographer Weems for the somewhat engaging story of the Cherry Tree. The elder Washington returned home one day to witness the ruin of a favorite cherry tree. It had been ruthlessly cut to pieces and the stern parent was exceedingly wroth. He strode angrily to the house and summoned the children before him. It was a trying ordeal for the little people, and it must have taken a stout little heart to face that angry parent and say as George said, "Father I cannot tell a lie. I did it with my little hatchet."

The truthfulness and manly courage of the little fellow touched the father's heart, and all his anger vanished. "Come to my arms, my boy," he exclaimed, "I would rather lose a thousand cherry trees than have you tell a lie!"

The place is still pointed out on the Rappahanock where Washington is alleged to have thrown a dollar clear across a distance of nearly half a mile. "Impossible," remarked one of our recent distinguished French visitors, who was here at the time of the Yorktown Celebration, "it seems impossible that the young man should have thrown a dollar so far as that." "Not at all," replied Senator Evans, to whom the remark was addressed, "Your Grace must know that a dollar in those days would go further than it does now." It is questionable whether the subtleties of an American joke are appreciated by a foreigner.

Washington was always a strict disciplinarian, and a great stickler for promptness. Yet he fell a victim to Cupid and was guilty of the unpardonable sin of keeping a company awaiting his arrival. Stopping for a few moments at the home of the Widow Custis, he ordered his negro servant to hold his horse till he should reappear. The moments sped along on only the wings of a lover knows, and soon the darkey became uneasy. There was no help for it, and though the snow by that time had nearly covered both horse and rider the servant dared not call his master. When at length Washington came out, he was ready to box the poor negro for his failure to remind him of the time. No amount of explanation could relieve the young man's embarrassment, and he suffered all manner of chaff from the guest who divined the cause of his detention throughout the balance of the evening.

A visit to his old home in Mount Vernon the last summer did his acquaintance me with the sweet simplicity of Washington's home life than any book I have ever read. There was the old harpsichord on which his niece Nellie played the old-fashioned music of the day, that alas was usually of a sombre and melancholy kind. But the room looked out on a lovely view, and the quiet Potomac shone in the distance. I could well imagine how Washington with his calm, reflective nature could enjoy the quaint old hymns that were played at eventide. From the portico one can almost see the spire of the church in Alexandria where the family attended divine service. The white porcelain name plate is still affixed to the creaking door, and the little wooden church remains the same.

The twenty-second day of February therefore will go down in history as one of the days on which a great heart came into the world. The work of Washington will yet engulf the monarchies of the old world. The doctrine of the divine right of Kings is slowly but surely disappearing before the Declaration of Independence.

February is a great month even if it is a short one. Good goods generally come in small packages.

FREE VALENTINES.

We have some sweet pretty valentines which we are giving away to all who would like to take COMFORT on trial for the next three months. They are the regular *capita davis* made up with Lace and Lithograph work, and we also include an assortment of comics. Send 6c. for trial subscription and we mail valentine package free. MORSE & Co., Augusta, Maine.

Blind Luck. A game in which a child dangles the mathematician.

BUY IT! TRY IT! Sent postpaid for 10 cents. P. O. BOX 2846, NEW YORK.



DEAR COUSINS:

Would you have me go begging for recipes? I'm sure you wouldn't, but really I fear that I shall have to do so before long, if some one is not more liberal. Please don't forget your cousin, even if she is more domestic and stay-at-home than Aunt Minerva or Busy Bee.

Now I will see what the copy drawer has for us this month. It looks rather empty, but perhaps I am deceived in its appearance. And first of all, here is a fine lot of receipts from an old contributor.

ORANGE MERINGUE.

Slice 6 peeled oranges in a dish and pour over 1 pint of milk boiled with 1-2 cup of sugar and 2 tablespoonsful of cornstarch, allowed to cool. Make meringue of the whites of 3 eggs beaten stiff and brown in oven.

HARRISON CAKE.

1 cup of sour milk, 2 cups of molasses, 1 cup of brown sugar, 1 cup of raisins, 1 cup of currants, 1-2 cup of butter, 1 teaspoonful of cloves, 1-2 teaspoonfuls of soda, enough flour to have dough stiff enough to drop off spoon; bake in 3 or 4 layers, icing between flavored with vanilla.

CRYSTALLIZED POP CORN.

Put into an iron kettle 1 tablespoon of water and 1 teaspoonful of sugar; boil until ready to candy, then throw in 3 qts. of nicely popped corn. Stir briskly until the candy is evenly distributed over the corn. Set the kettle from the fire and stir until it is cooled a little. Then every grain will be separate and crystallized. Care must be taken not to have the stove too hot, lest the corn will be scorched.

CORN MEAL PUDDING OR PONE.
1 cup of wheat flour, 1 egg, 1 spoonful of lard, 1 of sugar, 2 teaspoonfuls salt, 1 of soda; mix with 1 quart buttermilk, add corn meal.

EGGLESS CAKE.
1 cup of sugar, 3 tablespoonfuls of butter, 1 cup of sweet milk, 2 cups of flour, 2 teaspoons of baking powder.

NUT CAKE.

2 1/2 cups of sugar, 1 cup butter, 1 cup of sweet milk, 4 cups of flour, 3 eggs, whites and yolks beaten separately, 3 teaspoonfuls of baking powder mixed in the flour.

FOR BETWEEN LAYERS.—Whites of 2 eggs, 1 tablespoonful of powdered sugar to an egg, 1 cup of chopped hickory nuts or any other preferred nuts; frost the top with plain frosting and lay on whole nuts.

BUTTER TAFFY.

1 cup of sugar, 1-2 cup water, 1 teaspoonful molasses, butter the size of an egg, 2 teaspoonfuls of vinegar.

ICE CREAM CANDY.

1 cup of sugar, 1-3 cup of water, 1-4 teaspoonful cream tartar, butter size of an egg; boil all together 15 minutes, not stirring till taken from the fire, then add extract whatever preferred.

Miss L. G. GRAMM, Cordelia, Penn.

Here are some answers to Cousin Pearl's request.
If Cousin Pearl will add the juice of one lemon to each pint of peach juice she will find that the acid destroys the rosy nature of the peach and produces a sparkling and fine flavored jelly.

Mrs. A. H. GOTTSCHALL,
210 Hummel St., Harrisburg, Pa.

Cousin Pearl wishes a recipe for

GRAHAM BREAD.

4 heaping cups of graham flour, 1 teaspoonful of salt, 1-2 coffee cup of molasses, 1 heaping teaspoonful saleratus, this last must be dissolved in a little hot water, this liquid must be stirred into the molasses until it foams well, pour it on the meal, and enough milk (or milk and water) to make the dough as stiff as cake mixture; put in two pans and bake until done.

ANNIE I. CRANDALL, Milton Junction, Wisc.

Now let us see what else we can find among the letters.

Cousin Ceres:—I send you a recipe for the benefit of COMFORT COUSINS.

ECONOMICAL CAKE.

1 cup sugar, 1-2 cup butter, whites of 3 eggs, 1-2 cup sweet milk, 2 cups flour, 1 heaping teaspoonful baking powder; bake in two layers in a hot oven.

FROSTING.—Yolks of 3 eggs, 1 cup pulverized sugar, 1 teaspoonful vanilla; beat 20 minutes and spread between the layers and on top.

ADA SAMPSON.

Dear Cousin Ceres:—I have seen so many recipes and such nice ones, I thought I would send you a good recipe for

BENTON CAKES.

1 qt. flour, 5 ounces butter, 2 teaspoons best baking powder, wet with water and make a soft dough as for biscuit, roll very thin and cut round; bake in hot oven 10 or 15 minutes.

Here is another recipe for

CORN MEAL CAKES.

Take 2 cups yellow corn meal, sift, and put 1 teaspoon salt in meal, pour on boiling water until it is in a stiff mass, let cool, add 1 tablespoon butter, 1 cup flour, enough water to mix rather stiff; bake on hot griddle.

JENNIE A. M.

I will send a cake recipe where the yolks of the eggs are used for frosting, for the benefit of Magnolia May.

LEMON PUDDING.

1 quart sweet milk, 1 pint bread crumbs, 1 cup sugar, a lump butter size of an egg, yolks of 4 eggs, grated rind of 1 lemon; bake 1-2 hour, then take whites of the eggs, 1 cup sugar and the juice of the lemon. Beat the whites until stiff, add the sugar and lemon juice, spread it on the pudding, place in the oven 3 minutes to brown.

NOODLES.

2 eggs, butter size of a walnut, 3 tablespoons sour cream, flour enough to make a rather stiff dough; knead, roll out very thin and cut in narrow strips; cook 1-2 hour or less.

COOKIES.

2 cups of sugar, 1 cup sour milk or cream, 1 cup shortening, 1-2 butter and 1-2 lard, 1 teaspoon soda.

CREAM CAKE.

2 cups flour, 1 cup of sugar, 1-2 cup butter, 2-3 cup sweet milk, 2 eggs, 2 teaspoonfuls baking powder; put whipped cream between layers.

I would like for you to send me a recipe for making pie crust of lard, flour and water, how much of each to take.

COMFORT'S FRIEND.

Perhaps the cousins would like a nice recipe for

CREAM CAKES.

Put in a stewpan 1 cup water, 1-2 cup butter, when boiling add 1 cup flour, stir in briskly. Take from the stove and cool and then add 3 eggs lightly beaten, stir until smooth. Drop on buttered tins and bake in a quick oven about 20 minutes. This makes 12 cakes.

LULA M. ROBERTS, Milton, N. H.

FEATHER CAKE.

1 egg, 1 cup of sugar, 1 cup sweet milk, 1-4 cup butter, melted, 2 cups flour, 2 teaspoonfuls baking powder.

BUTTERMILK PIE.

One cup sugar, 1 teaspoon butter, beat together, 1 egg, 1 cup flour, 1 cup buttermilk, flavor with lemon; bake with under crust only.

ICING FOR CAKES.

Take the white of 1 egg, beat to a froth, add 2-3 cup of white sugar and beat till smooth; put on the cake while warm, flavor if you wish.

SARAH E. HESS, Central, Pa.

FRUIT JELLY CAKE.

2 cups of sugar, 2-3 of a cup of butter, the same of sweet milk, 4 eggs, 3 cups of flour, 3 teaspoonfuls of baking powder, stir together then divide into 3 equal parts; into one part stir 1 tablespoon of molasses, 1 cup of chopped raisins, 1 teaspoonful of cloves, 1 of cinnamon, and 1 nutmeg; bake, put together with jelly or frosting.

PORK CAKE.

1 cup of salt pork, 1 cup dried apples, 1 cup of raisins, 1 cup molasses, 2 cups of sugar, 3 eggs, 1 tablespoonful of soda, spice to taste. Chop the pork and raisins together, add 1 cup of water.

Mrs. HATTIE DUNHAM.

Dear Cousin Ceres:—I will send you some recipes which I know to be "tried and true."

MILK MUFFINS.

1 cup of milk, 3 eggs, 1 tablespoonful of butter, 1 1/2-2 teaspoonfuls baking powder, flour enough to make the batter a little thicker than for pancakes; bake in a quick oven.

LEMON CAKE.

1 cup of butter (packed), 2 scant cups of sugar, 10 eggs—yolks and whites beaten separately—one small cup of milk, juice and rind of a lemon, 1 small teaspoonful of soda, flour to make tolerably thin batter (a little over 3 cups.)

COTTAGE PUDDING.

1 cup of sugar, 1 tablespoonful of butter, 2 eggs, 1 cup sweet milk, 3 cups flour, 1-2 teaspoonful of soda, 1 teaspoonful of cream tartar, sifted with the flour, 1 teaspoonful of salt; rub the butter and sugar together, beat in the yolks, then the milk and soda, the salt, and the beaten whites alternately with the flour. Bake in a buttered mould; turn out upon a dish; cut in slices; eat with liquid sauce.

GOOD YEAST RAISING.

Boil a handful of hops in 2 quarts of water 10 minutes, then strain and add 6 good sized potatoes (grated), 1 cup sugar, 1 tablespoon of salt, sometimes 1 put a spoonful of ginger in also. Let the potatoes and hop water simmer 1-2 hour, when lukewarm, add 1 cup of good yeast, let it rise. This is the best recipe I have ever tried for making jug yeast. It should be kept in a cool place.

SUGAR COOKIES.

Here is a cheap recipe for sugar cookies: 2 cups white sugar, 1 cup shortening, butter or lard, 1 cup sour milk, 1 level teaspoon saleratus dissolved in milk, season with cinnamon, 1-2 teaspoonfuls.

Mrs. MAY ORRIS.

I thank all who have sent recipes, and would be grateful for a few more good ones, plainly written.

Yours in the kitchen,
COUSIN CERES, (Care of COMFORT.)

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who wish it, this recipe in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, by addressing, with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. NOYES, 820 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.

OUR NEW MAMMOTH SAMPLE BOOK FOR 1892

For the young ladies containing 14 fancy illustrations, and 20 fine photos, (no two alike), (free), all for 10 cts. Address BOX 103, BATTONIA, OHIO.

New Book

Try our Little Gem. It will prove a gold mine to you. 10c. Gray Low, Augusta, Me.

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Send 2c. Stamp for Sample Book of all the FINEST and Latest Style Cards for 1892. We also have a CARD, NOT TRASH. UNION CARD CO., COLUMBUS, O.

2 Cts.

Send 2c. Stamp for Sample Book of all the FINEST and Latest Style Cards for 1892. We also have a CARD, NOT TRASH. UNION CARD CO., COLUMBUS, O.

SPORTING GOODS

64-page catalogue for stamp. Finest line of goods made. Information that will be sent you FREE. HENRY & CO., Box 8, CHICAGO, ILL.

CARDS

We send CARDS, not trash, riddles and TRASH. Agents' cards of quality 50 new styles for a 2c. stamp. A useful present FREE. ALLING DRUGS, Durham, Conn.

LOVELY

SAMPLE CASE OF NEW CARDS. 50 new styles for a 2c. stamp. A useful present FREE. ALLING DRUGS, Durham, Conn.

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A handsome illustrated catalogue of harness, at inside wholesale prices, sent free by addressing Flour City Harness Company, Minneapolis, Minn.

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Free Trip for the winner. All expenses. Send 5c. piece for particulars. "WORD CONTEST," Box 549, Milton, Pa.

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Cake Tins, loose bottoms. Cakes removed without breaking. Steady paying business for good agents. Sample Set 30c. Richardson Mfg. Co., Bath, N. Y.

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Disorders treated by mail SUCCESSFULLY. IMPROVED methods. Prescription sent free. Address, L. S. FRANKLIN, Music dealer, Marshall, Mich.

FAT FOLKS

Using "Anti-Corpulency Pills" lose 15 lbs. a month. They cause no sickness, contain no poison and never fail. Sold by Druggists everywhere or sent by mail. Particulars (sealed) 4c. WILCOX SPECIFIC CO., Phila., Pa.

A BIG OFFER

50c. MADE IN A MINUTE! If you will hang up in the U. S. or some public place, the two above bills that we send, we will give you a 50c. cert., and send it in advance with samples and bills. This will trouble you about one minute, and then if you want to work on salary at \$50 or \$100 per month, let us know. We pay in advance. GIANT OXIE CO., 43 Willow St., Augusta, Me.

Please mention COMFORT when you write.

IN OPIUM

Or any other drug has got the best of you, send to THE WEEKLY INSTITUTE, Cincinnati, O., and receive a never-failing cure FREE BY MAIL.

SILVERWARE

WATCHES-JEWELRY, Big Salary or Commission. Agents and line of Clocks, Spoons, Knives, &c. Agents WANTED. Box 5, Wallingford Silver Co., FREE. WALLINGFORD SILVER CO., 24, Wallingford, Conn.

Best Offer Yet

Silk Fringe, Gold Beveled, Beaded Edge, Lace Edge, Fancy Shape, Hidden Name, Sovereign and Vining Cards (16 times size of 10c. stamp). Illustrated Premium List and Best Terms to Agents sent with every order. TALK CARD CO., 24, New Haven, Conn.

PIMPLES

BLACK HEADS. FLESH WORMS. "MEDICATED CREAM" is the ONLY KNOWN, harmless, pleasant and absolutely SURE and infallible cure. It positively and effectively removes ALL, clean and completely in a few days only, leaving the skin clear and unblemished always, and clearing it of all mudiness and coarseness. It is a true remedy to cure and never a paint or powder to cover up and hide blemishes. Mailed in a plain, sealed wrapper for 50c. or \$1.00, by George H. Stoddard, Druggist, 1226 Niagara St., Buffalo, N. Y.

LADIES

I have a perfectly harmless, simple but sure recipe which will beautify the complexion, remove wrinkles. It eradicates tan, freckles, and impure complexion, skin, blooming cheeks, and clear, soft and beautiful complexion. I will gladly send this recipe to any lady who will send me six one-cent stamps for postage, &c. MRS. A. D. WARD, B. 2, Avon, N. Y.

A BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

Rich and Elegant Ring or Breast Pin sent Free. A different Gem for each month. Amethyst, Diamond, Emerald, Garnet, Hyacinth, Moonstone, Opal, Pearl, Ruby, Sapphire, Topaz, Turquoise. Send address, with size of finger and Birthday Month. We want you to show it to friends or act as Agent. We require an Agent in every City and Town, and make this liberal offer to introduce these Rings and Pins, which are entirely new and novel. Nothing on the market sells like them. Write at once. Natal Jewel Co., P. O. Box 2808, New York City.

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Ladies or Gents Size. Warranted 21 Years. For Perfect Time this Famous Elgin or Waltham Watch is ahead of the world. BEATS THE RECORD. The oldest conductor on the fast limited train between New York and Chicago, which runs on the closest time in the world, says that "this one year this watch varied only 2 seconds," the closest time on record. This watch has never been sold for less than \$30.00. We will now sell it for \$13.95. It is full engraved, stem winder, Elgin or Waltham, double tempered hair spring which cannot break; the jewels are solid diamond, ruby stones, which will never wear out of place. Don't compare this elegant timepiece with the cheap plated watches advertised at various prices. Bear in mind that you are buying a watch your jeweler would charge you from \$40 to \$70 for. Elgin wind, stem set, running case, and one of the best Elgin or Waltham timepieces made. FREE TO EXAMINE. This watch is on sight, and we offer to ship you either ladies or gents size, as you select, by express C. O. D. for \$13.95. You can examine at express office and if satisfied pay the price and charges and take the watch. If not as represented order returned to us at once and pay nothing. Remember you pay nothing unless you take watch. Cut out this advertisement and send with order to CHICAGO WATCH CO., 281 Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.

A Perfect Fountain Pen for 15 cents.

Heretofore anyone wishing a good fountain pen would be required to pay from \$2.50 to \$4.00. After considerable experiment we are now able to offer the public a fountain pen that can be relied upon, and at a price that brings it within the reach of all. While never before has a fountain pen been offered so low, it must not be classed as a cheap, catch-penny affair; we stake our reputation upon it, and if not found to be worth several times the price we ask, will refund the money paid. It is elegantly made, fitted with a non-corrosive pen that will not fill or clog, and includes a rubber tipped glass filler and two extra pen points, in a neat case. Price 15 cents, postpaid. Good agents wanted. Address, EAGLE SUPPLY CO., 22 New Haven, Conn.

A STORY OF A THOUSAND DOLLARS

AND HOW TO GET IT!

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WE HAVE taken a common pint measure such as is used by grocers for measuring as are sold for very seedsman, and we have poured all the peas into a pint "Mason" glass preserving jar which fills the jar just even full. We have screwed on the top and sealed it and have had it locked up in the Jersey City Safety Vault, where it will remain until March 17th, 1892, when the contents will be counted by a committee of subscribers. WE WILL GIVE \$250.00 CASH to the first person who tells us by mail the correct number of peas in this jar; \$150.00 CASH to the 2d; \$100.00 CASH to the 3rd; \$50.00 CASH to the 4th; \$25.00 CASH to the 5th; A SOLID GOLD WATCH to each of the next five; a Singer Improved, High Arm SEWING MACHINE to the next five; a handsome SILK DRESS PATTERN to the next five. To the person sending in the last correct answer we will give \$100 cash; to the next to the last \$50 cash, and to each of the next ten, their choice of Solid Gold Watch or Silk Dress Pattern. IF THERE ARE NO CORRECT GUESSES the first prize will be given to the one who gets nearest to correct; the 2nd prize to the next nearest, and so on until every prize above offered has been awarded to the best guessers. ANSWERS MUST REACH US BY MAIL on or before March 17th, 1892, as the peas in the jar will be counted, and prizes awarded that day. Our April papers will tell the number of peas in the jar, and give the names and addresses of the winners of all the prizes. WITH ONE GUESS we require you to send 25c in postal note or 50c in stamps for subscription to either of above papers (your own choice). WITH TWO GUESSES send 50c postal note or 50c in stamps for subscription to two of above papers (your own choice). WITH FOUR GUESSES send One Dollar bill or \$1.04 stamps for a subscription to all four of above papers. The papers are all entirely different reading matter, and very interesting to every member of every American Home. Our object in giving these prizes is to introduce our publications and keep our circulation up to 500,000 copies a month, and thus secure our present price for advertising space which is \$2.50 per line with 750 lines to the page. We are well able and take pleasure in giving all the prizes we offer. We are favorably known to every Bank and Corporation in our city. Address AMERICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY, Washington and Sussex Streets, JERSEY CITY, N. J.

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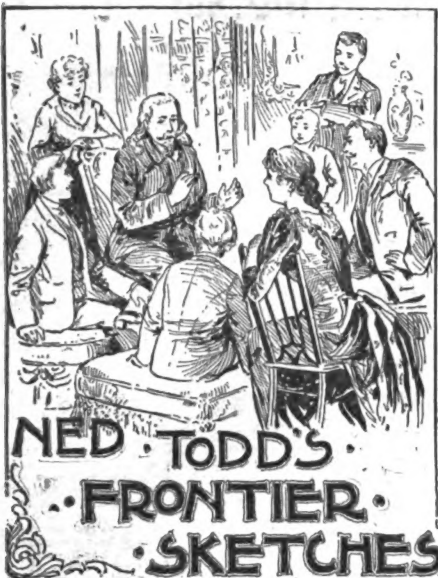
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THE CRAZY BOOMER.—THE BENDERS' DEN.

Somewhat it seemed of late that everybody wanted to come. Ned Todd had declared he would tell no stories in the daytime.

"What do I want to be a talkin' for and keepin' you folks from your work," said Ned Todd.

This famous backwoods hunter, detective and guide, we presume, is familiar to all of our readers as he is to everybody in the territory of Oklahoma. But for fear there should be some who do not know him well, we will state that Ned Todd is about forty-two years of age, a man brave as a lion, who has had more adventures than any other man living. Is noted for his courage, kindness of heart and his general desire to please everybody.

He was stopping at the Sturgeon House in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Among his many friends were Winnie Dawson, a pretty girl of sixteen years of age who was teaching a subscription school in Oklahoma, and Jack Royal, a young clerk who everybody said was "sweet on Winnie," then came in two gentlemen who are known to the literary world. They were Tom P. Morgan and John H. Whitson, who have both established quite a reputation as story writers.

"I have come to Oklahoma just on purpose to see Ned Todd," Morgan declared, "and pump him dry."

"You have reason to, Tom," John H. Whitson answered.

"You mean something scurrilous, John."

"No I don't."

"Oh, I can tell by your eye."

"I merely mean, Tom, that you have got to get your ideas from some one."

Tom Morgan winced under this thrust, but when Tom saw the laugh about to be turned on him he quickly retorted.

"I got my ideas just like you get your money, John, I borrow them."

"Yes, but I pay back the money I borrow and you was never known to return a borrowed idea."

"Well, if I have any old, worn out, exhausted idea of yours, John, you are welcome to it," said Tom Morgan.

"Here comes Ned Todd, boys," said Jack Royal. "Come, now, hush your nonsense and maybe we can get a story from him."

"Yes, I would rather hear him tell a story than those two authors quarrel."

"Why, bless your pretty soul my dear Winnie," began Whitson.

"Hold on, John, or I'll tell your wife, and she will bring you back on your Kansas ranch in a hurry."

"Don't interrupt me, Tom, when I am talking to the fair sex. That's always the way with a bachelor."

"What were you going to say to me, Mr. Whitson, when you were interrupted by Mr. Morgan?"

"I was going to tell you that Tom and I never quarrel. We've got to have something to sharpen our wits on, you know, just as you sharpen a knife on a stone."

"Yes, I am the steel and he is the stone," put in Morgan.

"Go it, Tom, you are sure to have the last word."

Before the authors could say any more Ned Todd was seated and Miss Winnie drawing a chair up close to him, and Jack Royal drawing a seat closer to her, both said:

"Now Mr. Todd."

"Well now," Ned Todd smiled.

"Won't you tell us some stories to-night?"

"Did I promise I would?"

"You did."

"Then I will. I make it a point to never make a promise which I don't keep."

Ned Todd took out his pipe and some tobacco.

"I have that as a good omen," said Whitson.

"Whenever Ned Todd takes out his pipe and tobacco a story is not far away."

The eyes of pretty Winnie Dawson were gleaming as bright as diamonds.

"Now, Miss Winnie, I must ask a privilege of you," said Ned.

"What?"

"To smoke."

"It's granted."

"Is smoking offensive?"

"No, not when you are telling such thrilling stories."

The rumor that Ned Todd was firing up and was going to spin some yarns brought several more persons into the large sitting-room of the Sturgeon House, among them Mr. Sturgeon's two boys, Robert and Phil.

"What do you want to hear to-night, Miss Winnie?"

"Tell us something about Oklahoma."

"Oklahoma?"

"Yes, Oklahoma before anyone lived here."

"And while so many were trying to live there," put in Jack.

"You mean tell you a story about boomers?"

"That's it. A story about boomers."

"Very well, I will tell you a story about a crazy boomer I once knew. He was a typical boomer this fellow was. He had come here at an early day and stuck to the borders of Oklahoma with a persistence and a determination that were admirable. Had he evinced as much pluck at almost any of the many callings in life, he would certainly have become rich in time."

"Well, he entered with Payne into Oklahoma. He traveled to Rockfalls and when the town was laid out he located some town lots, staked them off, and laid out a farm."

"Some of the other people who were on this raid built houses and Rockfalls became quite a city, as everybody knows, but Gobe Hart, as this boomer was known, had no money to build a house."

"He merely put up a tent on his farm, ploughed three or four acres of ground and seemed happy and contented."

"He had at last reached the promised land. The boomers had made the invasion so secretly that no one suspected them and they were not found until late in fall or winter."

"One day when the ground was covered with snow a rumor came that soldiers were coming. At the time I was a government scout and had been sent to find the boomers. I was not long in locating them at Rockfalls and so reported at Fort Hill."

"A lieutenant and thirty men were sent to drive them out and destroy their improvements. Now Gobe Hart had no improvements to destroy, save a chicken house and a pig pen. When the soldiers came he went into his tent, got his gun and swore he would fight."

"His wife seized his gun and tore it from his hand. By this time the lieutenant was at the tent."

"I assure you," he said, "you shall none of you be harmed. We only have orders to remove you out of the territory."

"But my farm," roared Hart.

"You have no farm."

"Look at my improvements."

"The lieutenant laughed and told him to pack them in his wagon. He went then to order the houses

burned and Gobe Hart sat down on the tongue of his wagon and began to rave and swear and tore his hair from his head by handfuls. I was with the soldiers and went to him to know what was the matter, and he rose and seizing my arm cried:

"See, it is this way for thirty years I have waited and watched for this. I have come at last to Oklahoma and it is mine. Look!"

"And he pointed to the bleak hills about him."

"See all those broad acres, those great farms bending under corn and grain. They are mine. See those great houses and those bins of corn and wheat. All—mine. I have them at last. I have earned them by waiting, but now they've come to take them—they shan't do it. My gun—my gun! They are all on fire—I will die resisting—I will die for my home."

"He looked and saw the houses on fire and tried to reach his gun. The man was near insane. I seized him and held him with difficulty. You don't know how strong a mad man can be till you tackle him once. He fought, kicked and bit. We had to tie him and he frothed at the mouth like a mad man. I never saw his like before and pray I never may again."

"See my great farms all on fire—all on fire," he cried. "I am ruined, everything is gone and I am ruined."

"In vain we tried to reason with him. He would not give heed to us. We placed him in his wagon and he was started out of the territory."

"The first night we camped he broke away and ran over the prairie. For two days we hunted for him and found him at last wandering half famished on the prairie. He ran from us—ran as I never saw a man run before. I pursued him and caught him with a lasso and we brought him back, but that night he died raving of golden fields, of grain and rich harvests. We buried him on the plains, and on a stone which marks his grave is rudely cut, 'A crazy Boomer.'

Ned Todd paused. His pipe had gone out and he proceeded to replenish it and said:

"I promised you a love story this evening, but from appearances, which speak louder than words there is a 'Love Story' in progress between two of this company to night, and a second one could not certainly add anything to the interest which is seemingly being taken in the first."

And then to see Winnie Dawson blush, and Jack Royal edge his chair about one inch further from her, made all present think that Ned Todd's bump of perception was well developed, and after a hearty laugh at Winnie's expense, Ned remarked:

"I'll give you a story of a woman who once roamed over this country. Although a woman she was as desperate as any man that ever lived. She was bold, daring, cruel and unscrupulous."

"What did she do?" asked Winnie.

"She was a robber."

"A robber, a woman a robber?"

"Yes, she was not only a robber, but a chiefness of a band of robbers who made desperate names, and the Lord only knows how many murders they committed."

"What was her name?" Jack Royal asked.

"Belle Star, the bandit queen," Ned Todd answered.

Everybody started at the name, for many had heard of Belle Star before.

"I have heard of her," said Jack Royal.

"I wrote a poem about her," put in Tom P. Morgan.

"Which never was published," said John H. Whitson.

"It was; Frank Leslie's gave me ten dollars for it."

"Did they?" put in Whitson. "I wrote a short story about her for which I got fifty dollars."

"The editor was certainly drunk when he accepted it," said Morgan.

"Now look here, if you two authors are going to keep up that squabble all the time," put in Ned Todd, "I'd like to know when I'm to get a chance to spin my yarn."

Tom Morgan and John Whitson were the best of friends and their sallies of humor and repartee never for a moment ruffled the tempers. Both declared they were done and Ned Todd went on.

"Several years ago a woman came up the Arkansas river from Little Rock as far as Fort Gibson. She was a very rich woman and in great distress on account of the mysterious disappearance of her husband. I was at Fort Gibson at the time and the lieutenant of the fort sent for me to come and see the woman and try to obtain some clew of her husband. She said he had come into the Indian Territory to buy cattle and she had not heard of him any more."

"He was last seen near Webbers Falls in the Choctaw nation. Would I try to find him. Of course I would. She had a photograph of her husband which she gave me and I took it and went to Muskogee and there hired a Choctaw guide who said he knew all the country among those wild hills called the Seven Devils. We went to Eaufaula and mounted on two tough mustangs set out for the country below Webbers Falls. We soon reached a wild forest which was entirely strange to me. Night came on and thick clouds rose in the west portending a coming storm. It was soon on us. My guide deserted me and went off in the woods. I was alone. The rain came down in torrents."

"No doubt my guide was a part of the famous banditti known as Belle Star's gang I thought, and the thought did not tend to make me any the more comfortable. I quit the main road and plunging into the woods led my horse after me, for I could not ride owing to the darkness and thick branches."

"After a while I saw the gleam of a light in the distance and went to it. It proved to be a cabin and the only person I found there was a woman about forty years of age. She was dark with short black hair and black eyes. That woman was Belle Star, though I knew her not at that time. I asked permission to remain over night at her house which was granted. Then she prepared me a supper and put me to bed in an adjoining room."

"I don't know why I felt nervous. I had only a short piece of candle with me, and I got up as soon as I was alone and lighted it. I then saw what seemed a pile of blankets and saddles in another corner, and went to examine it. Under the blankets lay a dead man. He had been stabbed that very night in the bed in which I was trying to sleep. For a moment I was about as badly scared as any one could be. I examined the dead man as soon as I recovered enough to do so and saw that it was the missing man I had come to find. I dressed in a hurry, and buckled on my revolver. A few moments later I heard someone at the door."

"Who is there? I asked."

"Do you want anything?" said a voice.

"No."

"Then someone went away."

"I fancied I could hear them talking and saying that he was not asleep. And he was not asleep nor very likely to sleep that night."

"An hour passed and I had made up my mind to a desperate plan. I took my place at the side of the door, a revolver in hand to use as a club rather than a pistol and when someone came again to the door I made no answer."

"He sleeps," said a voice.

"The fastening to the door was easily removed, and a man entered."

"Crash came my pistol butt down on his head, and he fell like a bullock without a word. Another followed with a lantern and down he went. The third was Belle Star herself; I covered her with a revolver and made her tie my two would-be murderers, then followed her with my cocked revolver to my horse, made her saddle and bridle him, mounted and galloped away. Next day I went with a force of men, and the house was deserted save the body of the murdered man. It was several years before Belle Star met her fate. She was disguised as a man engaged in a desperate stage robbery when she was shot and killed."

Everyone sat in breathless suspense through the thrilling recital of Ned Todd's experience with Belle Star, and after a few minutes pause, Winnie Dawson asked for the Love Story; and as that seemed to be uppermost in her thoughts, Ned promised to give them a good love story the next time they were gathered around him for an evening's entertainment.

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Gold Hunting in California.

HOW THE BIG BONANZA MINE THAT YIELDED THREE HUNDRED MILLIONS WAS DISCOVERED.

JOHN W. MACKAY, A POOR IRISH LAD, LEAPS TO A GREAT FORTUNE.

The full story of the California gold hunters has never been told. The many privations, and dangers encountered by the hardy pioneers were enough to discourage the most hardy, and many a pile of bleaching bones, marks the spot where the emigrant met a cruel fate, sometimes by thirst and starvation, but more often by the bloodthirsty Indians who were ever on the alert to commit some deed of barbarism.

The sudden change in the fortunes of the gold hunters has never been equalled in the annals of mining. Men who to-day were worth a few pennies, in the morning found themselves possessed of more



ATTACKED BY INDIANS.

wealth than they ever dreamed of even in their wildest moments. It cost a man a dollar to get his shirt washed, and a new one was simply an impossibility, no matter what price he offered. Shovels and picks sold at fabulous sums, and carpenters earned twenty-five dollars a day. Farm produce was not to be had except in rare instances, and the farmer of '49 who had any sort of a farm, had a property equal to a gold mine. The farm hand was in paradise; whatever price he chose to put on his labor was cheerfully paid by the farmer, who was glad to get him at a price all the way from ten to twenty dollars per day and find. If a farmer's wife happened to have a spinning wheel, and a few yards of cloth more than she needed for her own wants, it was quickly and eagerly purchased at a figure sufficient to keep the fortunate spinner in silks all the rest of her life. It rained gold! It poured gold! all around nothing was heard of, nothing was thought of, but gold! gold! gold!

But of course in the midst of all this wealth there were some who never shared in it at all; whose ill luck seemed determined to cling to them despite their surroundings, and who finally became desperate and abandoned the search only to find themselves miserably poor, and worse off than when they left home. Some became saloon keepers, others sought employment in the various mines as section hands, and a few succeeded in locating themselves in a legitimate and respectable business.

It was to one of these mines that John W. Mackay, the great California millionaire, first offered his services. He was a bright, energetic young Irishman,



MACKAY IN THE GOLD MINES.

and soon won the confidence of the owners. In one of his trips to San Francisco he became intimate with Flood & O'Brien, who kept a saloon on Market St., much frequented by miners in those days. Flood & O'Brien had about 10,000 dollars in cash, and another man named Fair had some interest in the mine where Mackay worked as foreman. Mackay's men were the men who made the first cuts when a vein was to be opened. They had worked several months, and as yet there were no signs of pay dirt. Under such circumstances stock in the mine was at a fearful discount, and was worth but a few dollars a share. Still if gold was struck, the stock would advance rapidly, and the fortunate holders would become rich. Mackay had a salary of \$500.00 per month for his services as foreman and had saved a little, but not enough to be of service should any great change occur in the property of the mine. It was finally agreed that Flood & O'Brien and J. G. Fair were to wait advice from Mackay, and if he reported favorably they were to buy the mine, and he was to receive one-quarter. On his return to the mine, Mackay took his position at the head of the gang, and one afternoon a sudden change in the rock became apparent. The drill which he used seemed to sink into a soft substance. He immediately ordered the men to quit work, returned to the place and made his own tests. All around was a solid big boulder. This he pierced in every side, and each "tryer" came out with a solid coil of gold in the end. How far the gold extended he could not say, but enough was discovered to answer his purpose. He stopped work in that vicinity, and telegraphed to Flood & O'Brien. In a day the stock was quietly purchased, and the famous firm since known as the Bonanza King came into existence. No one, not even Mackay, knew the extent of the find. Out of that one pocket more than 3,000,000 were taken every month with scarcely any labor. The ore lay inside of this boulder, almost one solid mass. In fact so rich was this ore that in passing through the crusher, rocks had to be mixed with it to prevent clogging the wheels. It is probably the



"GOLD AT LAST!"

richest gold mine the world ever produced. When the news finally reached San Francisco, the wildest excitement prevailed. The saloon of Flood & O'Brien was surrounded by an excited mob eagerly discussing news of the great discovery. In less than twenty-four hours these men who had counted themselves rich with a trifle more than ten thousand dollars suddenly found themselves worth that many millions, and growing richer every moment. Alladin and his Wonderful Lamp was thrown into the shade. In all

the history of sudden wealth there is none to equal the story of the Bonanza Kings. Every one of them were poor men, and without any particular education. That they had brains has been proven by the masterly manner in which they took care of the fortune thus suddenly acquired.

The wife of Mr. Mackay is a leading society lady in London, and the magnificence of her jewels and the splendor of her entertainments are something that dazzle even a country farmer for its aristocratic bearings. Her daughter is a princess, having married the Prince of Collona, and she is grandmother to a boy who will some day succeed to the title. At the time of her acquaintance with Mackay she was the wife of a worthless fellow, who was good enough to die, leaving her one child, the princess referred to above. John Mackay boarded with her in those days, and when she became a widow lost no time in offering his heart and his hand.

Mrs. Mackay, however, does not like the papers to speak of her early life, and recently sued an English publisher for saying that she made her husband's acquaintance in the somewhat humble role of laundress. There is nothing discreditable in the story, and there is abundant evidence to prove that the facts are nearly correct. But the lapse of years makes it difficult to prove them, and the English newspaper had to apologize and pay costs. It makes no difference with sensible people whether Mr. Mackay made Mrs. Mackay's acquaintance when taking home his shirt on a Saturday night, or whether she met him at a ball. The fact that she was a poor, lonely widow struggling to support herself and child in a wild and somewhat lone community, doubtless touched his heart, and it is nothing that either need now feel disposed to conceal. But change of circumstance often change the people themselves, and the lack of a coat of arms is sometimes keenly felt by millionaires who acquired their wealth in their shirt sleeves.

Altogether Mrs. Mackay, no less than her husband, is a distinguished member of English society, and furnishes food for much of the current gossip. Her dispute with the celebrated painter Messonier, was the source of much amusement to the people of both London and Paris. Messonier is the head of the great painters of France, and his work commands fabulous prices. Mrs. Mackay's portrait as painted by him was rejected. The artist was furious, and declined either to sell the picture or destroy it. Instead, he sent it to the Salon, after intimating that the lady's chief objection arose from the fact that the wrinkles and other evidences of age were too faithfully reproduced. As most celebrated women are grossly flattered in the portraits exposed for sale, the sinister remark of the artist was accepted as true, and the critics enjoyed themselves immensely, and the press on both sides of the channel for weeks and weeks discussed whether Mrs. Mackay's wrinkles were or were not too pronounced, whether her claw feet and sunken eyes were or were not caricatured.

All this did not prove pleasant reading for Mrs. Mackay, and it is quite certain that should the offending journals get within the pale of libel, it will fare hard with them. Mr. Mackay spends most of his time in New York, and is rarely present at his wife's social festivities. The best of feeling prevails, however, and the husband is left to follow his business interests, as they may demand his attention.

His other partners in the mine are still residents of San Francisco, and I suppose it would be hard to find another firm so famous, and yet composed of such retiring men as that of the Great Bonanza Firm of California.

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In the Cosy Corner Of the Editors Sanctum



A group of thinkers was once discussing the question as to which of the three men was the most valuable to the community—the man of projects, the man of resources, or the man of imagination. They were unable to reach a conclusion, for said they: The man of projects invents a way to do a thing; the man of resources makes a practical application of the invention, and the man of imagination sings their praises. True, in some few cases all three characters are united in one man, as they were in Robinson Crusoe who devised, executed and applauded. But generally speaking men who devise and execute have no time to sing their own praises, or even to pat themselves on the shoulder. They are busy with the idea that has nestled in their mind; and yet they need encouragement, they require applause, they are dependent upon the approbation of their fellow-creatures. In other words, someone must have imagination, or the world will soon come to a standstill. Said the French poet Beranger: "Let me make the songs for a nation and I care not who makes the laws." It was not Farragut's, Sherman's, Sheridan's, or Grant's word that freed the slaves; rather was it the fervid imaginations of Mrs. Stowe, of Phillips, Garrison and Whittier which made liberty so dear to our people that they were willing to die for it. Without Jefferson's imagination Washington would have striven in vain to free this land from English bondage.

In fact, it is safe to affirm that no brilliant deed was ever wrought, no noble action ever performed until it had first been thought out and fought out in someone's imagination. Imagination discovered the new world long before Columbus set sail from Palos and Patrick Henry pictured in glowing sentences the battles of the Revolution long before George Washington was ready to fight them. The man of imagination is always far in advance of his time. "Westward the course of empire takes its way," sang Bishop Berkeley one hundred years before the foundation of the wonderful city of Chicago, or before the name of California was known to anyone save the learned members of geographical societies. But in singing the praises of the men of imagination, let us not be unmindful of what we owe to the men of action. We celebrate this month the anniversary of the birth of one of the grandest men of action that the world has ever known. He was absolutely devoid of imagination and that made him so valuable to his country. Had he been visionary, he would not have been so trustworthy; could he have wielded his pen as well as he did his sword, he might have been tempted to fight England by proclamation. Grant was also a man without imagination and so was Von Moltke, as France knows to her sorrow. But in our admiration for men of ideas and men of action we should not lose sight of the men of resources, for often in a humble way they accomplish wonders in benefiting their fellow-creatures. Dean Swift was once asked who in his estimation was the man of greatest resources that he had ever known. "That man is a woman," was his reply, "a humble peasant in my service. In peeling my potatoes, she was careful to save the eyes intact for planting and thus raised yearly several bushels for the use of her own family; with the bones from which I had eaten the meat, she daily made a pot of soup for her children; my old stockings she unraveled and with the yarn knit made a pair for her little ones; she raised six of the finest boys I ever set eyes upon, each of whom made a splendid soldier for King George, and while doing all these things and a thousand others of the same nature, she acted as anvil for the two big thump, ing fists of a drunken husband!"

People who work with their hands are very apt to look upon brain workers as idle folk. When George Stephenson, the inventor of the locomotive and builder of the first railway, would go to bed in the middle of the day his neighbors looked upon him as a lazy man, a sluggard. They couldn't imagine such a thing as a man's going to bed to think! Thinking is not work in some people's eyes, strange to say, and yet there can be no harder work than deep thinking. It arches the back, furrows the brow and dims the eye more quickly than does hewing of wood or drawing of water. Think how hard Archimedes was toiling when as the Roman soldier rushed upon him with drawn sword, he merely called out to him to be careful and not step upon the geometrical figures which he had drawn upon the sand. True, there have been thinkers who were also hand-workers. Elihu Burritt the learned blacksmith pounded his anvil while studying mathematics and languages; Hogg the Ettrick shepherd made verses while tending his employer's sheep, and Arkwright the inventor of the spinning-jenny worked out his ideas while occupied in shaving beards a week old for a ha'penny. To get down to the moral of this train of thought, we would counsel the man of brawn not to sneer lightly at the man of brains. They are both very necessary to the world's progress, and they should both stand shoulder to shoulder for the good of humanity. Hood's "Song of the Shirt" shows how ready the poet is to come to his fellow-creature's assistance, and many and many a blow has the good gray poet Walt Whitman struck on the anvil of his brain in order to forge an idea in defense of the laborer. Honor to genius!

Lackaday, we had nearly forgotten that Saint Valentine was born in this month when the postman laid a tiny envelope on our desk,

most neatly addressed in purple ink. Upon opening it, the following came to view:

Don't say you're old and turn away,
Confound in me most blindly;
Old wine, old books, old friends are best!
You're frosty but you're kindly.
You pass your life among your books
In far too much seclusion;
Just let me in to mix things up
In genial confusion.
I know some things not found in books.
Philosophy is sham, sir,
My name? why yes, I don't object—
Your valentine I am, sir.
So haste and open wide your door
And let me in beside you;
And if I prove not welcome, sir,
I'll never more deride you!

To think of such a merry sprite as this in the editorial sanctum! "Genial confusion" indeed! When should we get to press if this merry maiden were permitted to mix live "copy" with "copy" that had been killed; to mingle "standing matter" with new and cover up the hero of the continent story under an "ad" for soap? No, dear child, an editor has no time to be anyone's valentine or let anyone be his. Or more correctly said, his paper should be a distinct and separate valentine, or messenger of affection, sympathy and comfort to every one of his readers. When the beautiful dancer Barberini attempted to exercise her powers of fascination upon Frederick the Great, he closed his eyes and did what few kings have had the strength of mind to do, turned away from her. Prussia needed all his love, all his attention, and he was unwilling to weaken his heart by dividing it. Frederick was a great king and a wise one and COMFORT's editor may well profit by his example.

But, cries someone of our fair readers, you surely do not mean to assert that the brain worker and the hand-worker, the man of thought and the man of action do not stand in need of a woman's affection to cheer and sustain them? By no means, while it may be true as the good book asserts that woman was created for the greater glory of man, yet is it also true that all great men have been more or less dependent upon and inspired by the love of some good woman. This is even true of great warriors. Take Cromwell, Marlborough, Napoleon and Washington. Their devotion to their wives was at all times beautiful as it was praiseworthy. We have the words of Bismarck and Disraeli, that they owe their greatness to their wives. True, Sir Isaac Newton never found time to choose a wife and when upon one occasion he got so far as to take a maiden by the hand he forthwith sank into a fit of abstraction and in his absent-mindedness used one of her dainty fingers to stop his pipe with. We read much concerning the unhappy love of men of genius, but the makers of these books are very careful to omit such names as Addison, Balzac, Scott, Cooper, Longfellow, Tennyson and hosts of others, including Martin



THE COSEY CORNER IN OUR SUBSCRIBERS HOMES.

Luther, Bismarck, Carlyle, Gladstone, Thiers, Garibaldi, John Stuart Mill, Messonier, Michelet, Daudet, Howells and Steadman. Genius is no doubt a petulant child and often calls for great forbearance on the part of a wife; and yet as a rule the wives of great geniuses have been their safest critics. Scott stood so in dread of his wife's stern judgment that he often hesitated to read his poems to her, for she rightly held that he was wasting his glorious gifts by writing poetry. No, in spite of the fact that three of the greatest English poets to wit, Shakespeare, Milton and Byron did not live happily with their wives, we are of the opinion that genius far from being hampered by married life has in most cases found not only spiritual and mental comfort but its loftiest inspiration in conjugal love; but we should add that our only warrant in assuming that Shakespeare's affection for his wife was not what it should have been, is the fact that in his last will and testament he bequeathed to her his "second best bed."

But before passing on, suppose we give this subject of marriage a second thought; for woman has been poetically described as the Creator's afterthought, consequently his best thought. Cynics and pessimists always take it would seem, the keenest pleasure in sneering at marriage. They have called it the "grave of love," the "death-blow to individuality," the "selfish man's refuge," the "sale of personal freedom for a mess of greens," "an auction sale of hearts knocked down to the highest bidder." And a certain comic and satirical journal rendered itself immortal one day by giving the following advice to those about to marry: "Don't!" But take heart, patient angels of the fireside, all the disdain and contumely which the world may heap upon you will drop from your white wings at the last trump like autumn leaves from the fruit tree, making the golden fruit more manifest. Therefore, O

honest young men and earnest young women, go on with your wedding feasts and although there may be no divine guests present to turn the water into wine, yet shall ye find that the love from which selfishness has been winnowed hath power and potency to work many a miracle—sweeten toil, lessen sorrow, dull pain, gladden the humblest fireside and add sweetness to the plainest fare. Like a grab bag at a church fair, the Editor's drawer, when pulled way out is often found to contain some scraps bearing, as the lawyers say, all fours upon the very subject under discussion. Who may be the author of the following is a difficult matter to say, but one thing is quite certain it has never been published before. It is entitled:

PLAIN ADVICE TO THOSE ABOUT TO MARRY.

TO THE MAN.

If you think that a woman is any weaker-minded than a man, stop where you are.
If you have chosen a pretty woman without regard to her other qualities, halt, you are on the wrong road.
If you think that a house should have only one head and that head be yours, postpone your wedding indefinitely.
If you have an idea that you are too good for a picked-up dinner, remain a bachelor.
If you are of the opinion that marriage makes man and wife one and that you are to be that one, send in your regrets, at once.
If you intend to treat yourself any better than you treat your wife, don't take one.
If you have found it a hard task to be happy yourself, don't try to make anyone else happy.
If you suppose that running the house consists in paying the bills, don't undertake it.
If you are one of those men who think that ten per cent of their income belongs to the tap room, in heaven's name let marriage alone.
If you incline to the opinion that any manners are good enough for home manners, don't try to have a home.
If you intend to encourage your wife by telling her that her cake, puddings and pies are not so good as those your mother used to make, don't go any farther; break the engagement.
If you are marrying her for her figure, it would be wise on your part to watch her diet very closely.



TO THE WOMAN.

If you are going to marry a man for his looks, you mustn't be surprised when he gives you black ones.
If you are marrying for money only, you must only expect to get what money can buy.
If you only contemplate taking a husband in order to gain greater freedom, don't be surprised if he should profit by your example.
If you are merely marrying to spite your family, bear in mind that your husband doesn't belong to your family.
If you are going into the thing blindly, don't hold up your hands in holy horror when you get your eyes opened.
If you are marrying a man to reform him, it behooves you to exercise all the zeal and patience of the reformer.
If you have an idea that a cook book and an allowance can make a happy home, you should get yourself to a nunnery with all convenient speed.
If you are extremely fond of dancing, you would do well to marry a dancing master.
If you expect that God will bless your home, because you put that sentiment in yellow worsted and an oak frame, you are doomed to disappointment.
If you don't feel that you are qualified to be a poor man's wife, don't marry a rich one.
If you are fond of dress and show and empty parade and take pleasure in the frivolities of life, don't marry a man at all, merely marry something that will pass for a man.
If you have an idea that married life is any easier than it was in your mother's time, because you can live in a boarding-house and put your washing out, don't try it.
If you have been engaged three times before this, you had better wait six months; perhaps this engagement may be followed by still another.
If you hold the opinion that husbands are like unto anything that you have read of in novels, you would do well to inquire into the married life of those who wrote the books.
If you are merely getting married to work out some theories of your own, you would do well to discuss them first with the man upon whom you intend to make the experiments.
If you are going to marry a man out of mere gratitude because he once saved your life, stop and ask yourself whether it is not paying too much for the service.

Here we leave the subject for the time being, promising our readers that that intellectual grab bag, the Editor's Drawer, shall next month, possibly, be searched for some plain advice to those who are almost persuaded to remain single. There is no greater contradiction in terms than the expression "single blessedness." There can be no blessedness in this world save in partnership with our fellow-beings, not necessarily in marriage; it may be in friendship, in Platonic affection, in filial love. Of one thing however you may be assured that love is heaven and heaven is love, and that wealth and honors will prove to be but Dead Sea fruit unless love be there with them.

COMFORT'S MARCH NUMBER

will excel anything that has yet been given to our subscribers. We have many new illustrations and novelties in sketches to favor the readers of this magnetic monthly which is meeting with such popular greetings in all parts of the country. We receive many letters saying how can you give such a nice paper for so little money. Well, it is because we want to get our patrons to feeling that they cannot do without their LITTLE COMFORT, and be willing to renew as each term expires, for they may always be looking for some new and interesting feature to appear, therefore they will feel well paid for the small outlay.



DEATH OF A KHEDEVE.

TWO CARDINALS STRICKEN DOWN

The Duke of Clarence Suddenly Taken Off.

Princess Mary Heart-broken Now That Prince Albert is no More.

Funeral Not Wedding Bells.

Great Excitement Through All Europe.

And the United States is also in a fever of excitement over the same trouble that has stirred nearly all the people on this globe. The cause of the sudden taking off of The Great Khedive of Egypt, the mighty cardinals, Manning and Simeoni, and the soon to be KING OF ENGLAND, Prince Albert, Duke of Clarence, has all come from the same disease, that awful distemper "La Grippe" which is sweeping over the world and mowing down its victims by the thousand. It is not confined to High Life, it fastens its fangs into all sorts of human beings. Unless you prepare and fortify yourself against the attacks of this dread monster you, dear reader, as well as everyone else, are liable to receive a visit any day from the scourge. How common is the scene we present here of the poor mother not able to hardly get around herself, yet when the children are so sick in bed she must look after their wants as she is all alone with them. The telegraph columns of daily papers are filled each day with news from all parts of the U. S. telling of this one high up in life's station, that one middle way along or the very poor people who have come down to their grave during the passing by of the last twenty-four hours, and still the work of the slayer goes on. The weak are the first ones to fall victims and they should be ready to ward off the attacks and make them light as possible. It has been found that really the only thing to rely on to assist the weakly person through these attacks is Oxien, that great and wonderful food for the Nerves. It comes in tablet form so it can be carried in the vest or dress pocket so to be always handy; it drives out and kills any germs that remain in the system and down the monster every time. To those who are quite strong or very strong Oxien is a great help to ward off any possibility of the La Grippe getting a foothold. Oxien is now recommended as a hot drink. This excellent beverage is easily prepared by dissolving a tablet in hot water and it thus acts quickly. The



THE POOR MOTHER'S SORROW.

Oxien Porous plasters are the greatest assistant however for they pull while the food is driving, and it is then impossible for disease to gain control. Thousands of people from all parts of the world are sending for this wonderful food and the new plasters to comfort and soothe them in their misery. Any one can get a Free sample of the food to try for themselves by sending to the manufacturers, The Giant Oxie Co., Augusta, Maine, who want to do all the good possible and thus send free to all who write this month, and we recommend every reader of this paper to send to-day, don't wait until you are sick, have it ready in the house, or if you have been sick and don't feel quite as strong as ever be sure and send for some, and all should take advantage of the great offer this month.

Some people wonder what The Grip is like, well in the language of one who has had it we will say the first symptom is a general physical collapse. The patient falls all to pieces like a house struck by an earthquake; he tries to speak but finds the voice gone he is so hoarse, your feet increase in weight, each one seems to weigh a ton. Your joints seem packed in coarse gravel; you seem to travel like a top heavy load of hay drawn by an unbroken yoke of steers over new ploughed ground; cannot breath through your nose, and at times even through your mouth, then you breath through your pores which seem to be all closed up; your skull seems to be a kettle to boil your brains in, they are stewed like as a housewife stews dumplings, all the aches of all the ages seem to be focused within you. You suffer all the ills flesh is heir to and all your bones ache besides and this is what you escape if you keep Oxien on hand and take it regularly, for unless prepared it strikes people down as they come from shopping or weddings. The Princess Mary can never see her wedding day with the Prince now and become Queen of England as was to be her probable good fortune had not La Grippe come along and snatched them from her.



THE PRINCESS MARY HEART-BROKEN.



DEAR COMFORT FRIENDS:

How are you getting on with your New Year resolutions, pretty well cracked by this time, are they? Never mind, remember that

"Every day is a new beginning.
Every morn is the world made new,"
and do not be discouraged, but try again. Aim high, even if you do not hit the mark.

I believe I promised to announce another competition for the Essay Club this month. I had intended to have reports from the committees appointed last month, but have been prevented from writing to them, so we shall have to wait another month for those. Remember the yearly assessment of 10c.; all those not renewing before Feb. 1st will have their names dropped from the list. The subject for the next competition will be *The Comparative Ability of the Sexes; Is Man Superior to Woman?* A prize of five dollars will be given for the best essay on this subject; a year's subscription to COMFORT for the second best. Competition expires Apr. 5.

Now for the letters. So many, I know, are impatiently waiting for theirs to appear; but dear friends, you can have no idea of the immense number which I receive, and for even the best of them there is not room. So you must not feel too much hurt if your own good and interesting letter never gets into print; you may think that Auntie has read it, anyway. Some are still forgetting what I have said so many times about not using a lead pencil, and not writing on both sides of the paper; so they get in the waste-basket without delay. But I am talking too much. It is astonishing how garrulous we old Aunties do get.

"My parents were among the first settlers in this country, and when they first came here, as far as the eye could reach, there was nothing but the level prairie, look which way you might. Over these plains thousands of buffaloes roamed to their own sweet will. The Indians were friendly enough, almost too friendly in fact, for they were not very pleasant neighbors. But that was a good many years ago, too long ago for me to remember much about it. About four years ago I spent a summer in Colorado. I wanted very much to see a cowboy, and I shall never forget the first one I saw. Auntie, he didn't look one bit like I thought he would. He did not look any different from the western citizen in general. Will all the cousins write to me? Should like to hear from the South.

If you want to see a cowboy now, Blossom, we have one among us, and I will "trot him out" for your inspection.

"I want to be a cowboy and with the cowboys stand, A broad brimmed hat upon my head, a riatta in my hand.
And here on western plains so wild and so wide, I'd chase the long eared calf and brand the maverick's side.

So, Aunt, you want us to come again and tell more of that free Western life, do you? Well, here I am. I have just returned from a forty-five consecutive days roundup, tired, dirty and hungry. Found awaiting me some very nice letters from the cousins. These I will answer at earliest opportunity. The girls used to say my heart was just like a street car—always room for one more. It was never filled, I presume, because that one never entered. Just so with my correspondence—never so numerous but that one more is welcome. I am not a Darwinian in belief, but when it comes to a continued exchange of letters, then the "survival of the fittest" is my creed. Aunt, I hope you will not be uneasy that any of your nieces will lead me on to—well, you said what it was. I was never there myself, but have a dear friend who has suffered and he has given me the minute details as to the way girls write when they are just leading on. If any persist in this game, I presume it is something two can play at. Wis. Wild William bravely makes his statements as to what he will never do. Bravo! now stick to it Bill and maybe some girl will be the happier by your not getting her. Do not consider myself a coward. Like W. W. B., can make pumpkin pie (which I will compare with his) but I always enjoy them better when there is some one to eat them with me. So I would not say what might befall me. The poet says,

"There is a Destiny that shapes our ends rough,
How them as we will."

This seems to be prophetic of my case and so while working for the best am resigned for what fate (if such there be) has in store for me. I can see no impropriety in corresponding with any of our cousins, and we are prompted by unworthy motives? Why not give others credit for what we are willing to take for ourselves. Discretion of course should be used in all things, and they who are devoid of such should consult with those who are able to advise; and there are no better advisors than our mothers (God bless them). Well, I'm mounted again, but when, where or what shall I commence at? Ah! here is a long eared calf that needs attention, and while I am branding him, will think of a commencing point and write something of Arizona. Best wishes to all.

WILLIAM THAMES, Wilcox, Arizona.

Yes, God bless the mothers! If only the girls, and boys too, would not be so impatient to get away from Mother's advice, so prone to consider her "old-fashioned" and "behind the times," there would be fewer wrecks in the young lives around us.

"Mr. Charles Percy De Vere, you deserve a good 'jaw' from every one of Auntie's nieces. Now wouldn't you rather talk than chew tobacco? I'm sure I would, and don't you suppose that in talking one jaw would wear out as fast as the other? While in chewing tobacco—Well, I never took particular notice, but I do not think I ever saw a man who chewed tobacco on both sides of his mouth. As to talking, any one that reads your letters would think you were a pretty good talker yourself. Would be pleased to exchange photos with you (my I, Auntie?) Pedagogy, I liked your letter in March COMFORT very much. It is so intelligently written. Can any of the cousins tell me where I can get the story, Our Mary?"

SUNNY CHURCHILL.

of unknown correspondence very much, and wish some of the cousins would write to me.

IDA R. WILSON, Berclair, Texas.

"I suppose I like to read as well as anyone in the U. S. I read anything that I can lay my hands on. I read novels, but I say emphatically that it will not do to read them months at a time; it would be ruinous to your mind, your mind would dwell on the exciting, blood-curdling stories, and it would be poisoned against good, solid reading. You could not interest yourself in good books. These blood-curdling stories should be let severely alone. But the above is nothing, when compared to the infernal habit of using tobacco. They use it in this country in every shape, form and manner, men and women, boys and girls. The children use it before they can walk almost. The law should take hold of it. It is a very bad habit, and we should all hit it a lick whenever we can, and get everyone to quit the filthy habit that we possibly can. I am always sorry for



Lord of the sea, the sunshine, and the gale!
God of the brooding ocean and the storm!
Father of those who brave the treacherous main!
The sea is mighty and our boats are small!

Calm is the sea to-day, the sunlight free;
Fair is the lapping wind that fills the sail;
Lord, ere we go we trust our all to Thee;
Thy sea is mighty, and our boats are small.

When the safe stillness creeps upon the wave,
When the white moonlight cheers the silent night,
Guard us lest danger lurks beneath the calm,
Thy sea is mighty, and our boats are small.

When the wild hurricane uplifts its voice,
And cold embracing billows threaten us,
If Thou should'st slumber we are powerless;
Thy sea is mighty, and our boats are small.

Bread-giver to the crying fatherless!
Husband of widowed women left to mourn!
Our all—we leave them: Oh! protect them, Lord!
Thy sea is mighty, and our boats are small.

the 'Shut Ins.' To any of them that will write to me I will send them some reading matter, let them state what kind they wish. Would like to correspond with some of the cousins in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Your friend,

JAMES E. MCMAHILL,
Diamond, Van Buren Co., Ark.

I am ready to endorse most heartily every word that is said against the filthy tobacco habit, and am glad to find some more letters on the subject among those now at hand.

"I feel that my time has come. For the waste-basket? Perhaps. COMFORT and I have been fast friends these two years. Novels, clubs, love, charities, etc., comprehensive subjects, all have my heartfelt sympathies; but W. D. Bowen of Texas in the July No. of COMFORT struck the keynote of one of my particular hobbies, in asking the girls if they intended to boycott the boys who use tobacco, per Auntie's wish. By all means yes. And 'girlcott' them too if necessary. I've little doubt, but what that might prove the more efficient plan. As for me, I simply will not accept the attentions of any young man who uses the vile weed. I wish all the girls in the U. S. would unite in a single band of earnest workers, to fight the tempter in all his forms; each girl appointing herself a committee of one to see that every clause in the constitution and by-laws be most rigidly enforced. Never you fear girls, if the boys realized that not one girl in the whole U. S. would notice them, in any way, so long as they used tobacco or intoxicants, they would very soon reform, or—emigrate. Will Aunt Minerva or some one please tell me to whom I can apply for information regarding the organization and conducting a society of King's Daughters? I should like to correspond with some girl cousin between the ages of 19 and 22, who thinks as I do about the tobacco question; my address is with Auntie and her owls. NONIE."

I receive so many letters of inquiry about the King's Daughters, that I have decided to answer them by publishing an extract from one of Mrs. Bottom's talks, in a recent number of the "Ladies' Home Journal." Mrs. Bottom is the president of the Order in the U. S., and all information coming from her is authoritative. Leaflets, etc., will be sent to anyone sending stamp to the headquarters.

A FEW EXPLICIT DIRECTIONS.

I will give you explicit directions now as to what you should do so that you will not write "Tell me what I am to do?" You must be a member of our Order before you ever join any Circle; you can be enrolled as a member of the Order at our headquarters in New York City, 47 West Twenty-second street. Send your name and address there with ten cents, the membership fee, and there you can get your cross which is the badge of the Order. We are an incorporated society and our silver cross is the seal of our

corporation. You are not obliged to wear this cross, but no other cross can be worn as our badge; though a bit of royal purple ribbon is an emblem of membership, and can be had at the same place, so you can wear either one or both; but, if you can afford it, I would advise you to have the cross; it will cost you but thirty cents, and that will make the total cost forty cents. There may be some who cannot afford the cross—I know women who write to me from away off on the frontier, and they really have no money, no paper, no stamps. Nothing has touched me more than to receive letters written by educated women who are hedged in by the present environment so as to make it exceedingly difficult to get money enough requisite to write a letter, and yet they want to join our Order and wear this cross. I speak of this because if it comes to you to give, "In His Name," the little silver cross to one who cannot afford to buy one, I will see that your wishes are carried out.

"I noticed in the June number a letter from a young German of my age, expressing a desire to improve his knowledge of the English language by means of corresponding with the cousins. Now, I should like to improve my knowledge of the German language in like manner, and if Old Germany, as he styles himself, will write to me at my home, I will do my best to oblige him in every possible way. Another thing which pleased me was to learn that our Aunt Minerva was a Christian Endeavorer. I am a member of the Y. P. S. C. E. and accompanied the delegate of my society part way on her trip from Rhode Island to Minneapolis in July. Your nephew in C. E.,

ARTHUR C. ALGER, 110 Brand St., Elmira, N. Y."

Josephine Henniger, Sedgwick, Kans., would like the address of the young man living in Mo. who sent her some drawings.

"I wish to express my thanks to all the cousins who sent to me for lace samples. It was impossible to answer all those that had no stamps enclosed, as also to send samples to all that had, as the letters numbered about two hundred. To my knowledge I sent samples to all those that said they were poor, but if I have forgotten any, I will gladly answer them if they will write again with enclosed stamp. I would like to hear from some of the cousins engaged at stenography.

Miss M. SCHONGER, North Branch, Sull. Co., N. Y."

Now who can tell of a more curious home than the following letter describes? Please come again, my sailor lassie, and tell us more of your floating life?

"Shall I tell you about my old home, the place where I lived for nearly 11 years? I am pretty sure not one of the cousins ever had such a home, for it was a floating one, in other words, a whale ship. My father was master, and we always went with him. Oh, such a life as it was, and how I did love it in spite of its loneliness! There were so many strange and beautiful things (and creatures) to be seen, yes and places too, for we wandered about a good deal in our search for sperm whales, visiting often the western coast of Australia, and less frequently Tasmania, Java, and many other places whose names you have perhaps never even heard.

We went to Norfolk Island twice, you know that is where the descendants of the mutineers of the ship Bounty are living. About once in three or four months we would go into port to get our mail, and a fresh stock of provisions. Some times we would encounter bad storms, and get very much battered, so we would have to go into port for repairs; once or twice we came near going to 'Davy Jones' Locker,' but were always fortunate enough to escape. I dare say you would like to hear about the whales but my pen fails me; they were such enormous monsters, often 75 feet long with a circumference of 30 feet, and often much larger. Occasionally we would have a 'gam,' do you know what that is, my cousins? Well, sometimes two whale ships would be in sight of each other, and then the captain of one would take a boat-crew (six men) and go visiting the other ship, while a crew from ship No. 2 would go on board of ship No. 1. We would make an all day visit, the ships just as far apart as they could go without losing sight of each other so as to have as great a range of vision as possible. Perhaps sometimes we would raise whales right in the middle of the gam, and then such scampering as there would be for each crew to get back to their own vessel! If by combining forces there seemed to be a better chance of catching the whales, then the ships would 'mate,' or in other words, divide the work, and also the oil resulting from the catch. All the talking was of course carried on by flag; you have no idea how much can be said in that way when people know how.

A. L. S.,
Box 335, Whitman, Mass."

(Correspondents solicited.)

"Seeing a request from you and several of the cousins asking about stamps, I thought I would write to you about them. How many different kinds do you suppose there are in the world? Well, a collector in Europe has over 22,000 varieties. The U. S. has about 1,900 varieties. The rare ones bring high prices. The New Haven 5c. red, 1845, is worth \$500.00 and used at that; many are worth as much. The first one issued by the U. S. was in 1847, 5 and 10c. The 5c. is worth only 25c. used. It is the variety not the age, that counts. The first stamp issued was the 1d red of Great Britain, 1840. The Prince of Wales, Duke of Edinburgh, Czar of Russia, and many other famous people are stamp collectors. On the stamps are men, women, horses, birds, bears, ships, stars and scores of other devices. Mr. T. K. Taping, M.C., who has died lately, left a collection worth over \$500,000. I wish to correspond with all of the cousins by my name.

EARL MCEDREW, Young, Tenn."

"I have traveled very nearly across the whole continent of ours in order to meet you all this month, and expect to have a very pleasant visit. I have really traveled all but 600 miles of the distance from ocean to ocean, but have seen no country or climate equal to our Willamette valley. We are a little north of the latitude of Halifax, and last winter we did not have an inch of snow altogether, nor ice thick enough for skating. I want to say a few words regarding collecting. How many of the cousins are there who are not collectors? You can have no idea of the amount of pleasure and profit to be derived from the collection of stamps, coins, relics, minerals or of many other things. There are some things which are collected however, which I hope none of the cousins collect, such as tobacco tags or birds' eggs. Where does the benefit come in, in collecting tags? As to birds' eggs, I am strongly opposed to anything which will tend to destroy our songsters, while I am the deadly enemy of hawks and crows, those two worst enemies (next to man) of our smaller birds. However, this is foreign to my subject. How many collectors are there who read COMFORT who would like to form a club for purposes of exchange and getting acquainted with others in all parts of the country? I would like to have you all write and make suggestions.

W. F. CASE, Box 83, Molalla, Oregon."

Yes, collecting has a fascination for almost every one; I have found that out in my own experience, as my little geological collection grows. It is a very instructive occupation for young people, when carried on in some directions, but I agree with my nephew in his protest against collecting birds' eggs and tobacco tags; the latter is foolish, the former wicked.

"Meadville is a beautiful little city, situated in a valley on the banks of the Cussewaga river. It has a population of about 10,000 and is noted for its schools and colleges. At present, there is a great deal of excitement about natural gas, and many people are putting down wells on their premises. It seems to me that Wisconsin Wild Bill is rather hard on the girls. All flocks have their black sheep, and because one girl writes a letter not fit to be read, the rest should not be censured. I have corresponded with many young ladies, whose acquaintance was formed through the columns of papers, and never received one which I would be ashamed to have any one read. Why would it not be a good idea for the cousins to ask questions of general interest, and have a little space given in the columns of the paper for the answers? Am sure we could learn much thereby. Being a printer, must say that COMFORT is a well-printed and ably edited paper, and will prove a blessing wherever sent.

COMO, Meadville, Penn."

Does not Uncle Josephus' column very nearly fill this want, friend Como? And this letter speaking of your home, reminds me that I have some others in the same line; one from your own State, too.

"My home—nearly every newspaper reader in this broad land has heard of Scottsdale—is nestled at the western part of the Allegheny Mountains of Penn., and is the center of the great Connelville coke regions. It was but a short distance from here, on last January 27th, that the greatest mine explosion ever known in the United States, if not in the world, occurred. In an instant one hundred and nine miners were hurled to their doom, by the explosion of treacherous fire damp. It was my sad duty to assist in confining the victims, and it was indeed sad. In a long trench in one of our cemeteries lie eighty-nine of the victims. Not far from this trench is a smaller one, and here under the sod lie ten victims of the great strike, inaugurated in Feb. last and abandoned in June. Sixteen thousand men were idle and the loss of wages alone was nearly two millions of dollars. Nearly two thousand soldiers were in the coke region, a thousand being located in Scottsdale. It was by the soldiers that these 10 men were shot, while trying to destroy property. It was only the presence of the brave boys in blue that checked the strikers from sacking the numerous towns, but the blue uniform, shining gun barrels and determined looks struck terror to the heart of the poor misguided foreign strikers, a tool of the labor leader. Time up! tips, and I'm off.

P. S. Cousins I will be always pleased to hear from you.

BOYD, Lock-Box 684, Scottsdale, Pa."

Here is a nephew who wants just a word more on the novel-reading question, and as it is a good word, we will hear it.

"Star of the South, you are right in saying 'go and burn those yellow backed bits of paper,' but do not condemn the good with the bad. All the life and feelings of young people fascinated by some glowing love romance, is colored and shaped by the books they read. If it is false and weak, they will be false and weak; therefore, do not cut off the supply of good literature. How many young men have spent their earnings in the grog shop who should be reading! How many parents who have not spent ten dollars for books, would give thousands to reclaim a son or daughter that has fallen into temptation. I say, parents have the best of books, papers and magazines in your library, though you wear your silk dress or coat a little longer, for nothing will compensate to your family for the absence of books such as Shakespeare and Irving, Thackeray and Dickens. Who will say that Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' has done no good? This single tale stirred the heart of this nation, while at the moving of her pen, millions of swords and bayonets gleamed in the air, and vast armies fought face to face till liberty was given to man as man. Dixie, if love is an imagination, all man and womankind must at some time of their lives be fools, and why do the fair sex receive the attention of fools? Is domestic love, the love for parents, brother and sister also an imagination, or where do you draw the lines? Maggie Wilson, why not warn your sisters of the fast young man and gambler? Those who frequent the saloons, use big sounding oaths, drive fast horses and wear dandy garments. How often we hear from young ladies, 'he is only a little fast.' Young ladies, as life is precious and you value it, take no chances. One in ten you may draw a husband upwards, nine in ten he will draw you down. Wait awhile, many young men of noble character are on the look out for a good young lady, and your chances are not to be despaired of.

A new cousin, PRAIRIE BOY."

Good advice, girls! The young men know what they are talking about when they bid you beware of the fast specimens of their own sex, and you will do well to listen to them.

"I live in the Piedmont section of Va., near the Blue Ridge. This is a good farming country. Society is good. Christians of several denominations including the Primitive Baptists, Missionary Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists and D. n. k. rds or German Baptists. How many of the cousins, use big sounding oaths, drive fast horses and wear dandy garments. How often we hear from young ladies, 'he is only a little fast.' Young ladies, as life is precious and you value it, take no chances. One in ten you may draw a husband upwards, nine in ten he will draw you down. Wait awhile, many young men of noble character are on the look out for a good young lady, and your chances are not to be despaired of.

J. A. BOONE, Hickman, Virginia."

(Correspondents solicited.)

Suppose you should write and tell us about the Dunkard love-feast? These curious religious customs are very interesting to hear about, and instructive as well.

"I am a lad of nineteen and live on a farm, and like farming very well so far. I think Philip S. Walton has given us good advice, and we should not fail to try it. I am sorry to say that I have used those things which P. S. W. has mentioned until about two years ago, but never, never care to use them again. If there are any young gentlemen who have derived any benefit by using liquor, tobacco, profane language, or gambling, let them write to me, and I will hear from them. We may think it is a great pleasure and enjoyment, but I don't think it draws us closer to God our Master. The 12, 13 and 14 chapters of Romans have interested me lately, and those who have not read them yet, please read them. Now, Auntie, maybe we do not all think the same, but I think, if we would spend more of our spare time in reading the Bible that it would give us a great deal more joy and comfort, than corresponding with strange young ladies for fun. Your nephew,

BASHFUL BILLY."

"I agree with Mrs. E. L. and Mrs. Shellenberger, I have been married for three years, and know whereof I speak; any girl that gets married before her majority, will sooner or later rue it. I am very sorry for 'Shut Ins' and I wish to tell you that I have seen some very bad men. I have spent many years of my life upon a sick bed. While so many are telling of droughts and of floods, verily I can say Central Michigan is highly favored, it was dry last summer, but crops were not a failure and all have enough to eat and wear that have a mind to work for it; those that will not work do not deserve to have, I think, don't you dear Aunt? I cannot see why some ladies are always railing at the men; I would seem as though they never had brothers, father, husband, nor in fact any one that was near and dear to them except those of the feminine persuasion. Now for my part I have seen some very bad men, and I do think a really bad woman can put the worst man to shame that ever breathed. I have a son and husband; I once had a father and brother, and really I can't see but they are just as good, kind, loving and considerate as those of the other sex. And if we don't mean it, why certainly stop it, for it is unwomanly and sounds very much like some school-girl.

THOMAS."

"He that will not work, neither shall he eat" I believe in that thoroughly. You are right in saying that "a bad woman can put to shame the worst man that ever breathed." It is a painful fact that when our sex do fall, they seem to seek the lowest depths of degradation; and they drag down son, brother and husband as well in their fall.

Here comes a friend with kind words for COMFORT, and some helpful hints for the mothers.

"I will say I think COMFORT a proper name for our paper. I haven't been a reader many months, yet I have taken much comfort. Some say they like the chats with Aunt Minerva best. I can't say which I like best. I sometimes think Cousin Ceres is as good as she can be; when I want to do some cooking, I am



THE DIFFERENCE.

You say they're all alike?
Perhaps you're right.

Now this one's eyes are wondrous bright,
Her dimpled cheek is pink and round,
Her nose—ahem!—Her head is crowned
With soft brown fuzz. Her mouth's a rose,
She hath two hands and ten wee toes,
She laughs, she crows, she sometimes cries,
And though she cannot talk she tries.
But then, you say, she's not unique,
That other babies, so to speak,
Are just the same. Ah, well, to me,
This one's as different as can be—
I can't say how—but much incline
To think the difference is,
She's mine!
E. L. SYLVESTER.

sure I appreciate her very much. She is a great help to me with her many good things. Then dinner over and I have a little time to rest, I turn to Aunt Minerva and I am sure I get much comfort from the many good letters and Aunt's kind words. Then sometimes being in a mood to make something new, I turn to fancy work; I think it is splendid. So you see it takes all departments to make it perfect. And the children enjoy so much their corner. It would be a very strange person that couldn't be pleased with Comfort; it is for old and young, high and low. I wish more of the cousins would give their method of training children and how to get them interested in studies and books. We never should promise a child a thing unless we keep the promise; if we do they are apt to lose faith in me and say, 'oh she only told me so and so for a purpose.' Never repeat things we hear in the presence of a child, as it sets a bad example for tale telling. Children are much more close listeners than they get credit for. We should be very careful if we repeat anything in the presence of a child, to repeat it just as it was. If we get just a little way from the straight story, the child is apt to get in a habit of the same, and that habit will grow with the child until it eventually thinks it no harm to stretch the blanket just a little, for mamma didn't tell it quite like it was. Why don't we all sign our name to our letters instead of leaving it with Aunt? It certainly would make her less trouble. I will just say if I see this in print I will feel much the same as a small boy with his first pants (with pockets in them.)

Mrs. NETTIE ROAKS, Malvern, Mills Co., Iowa.

"We are given this beautiful world to live in; may we be led to strive more and more to emulate the glorious example of our Saviour. Let us see how much good we can accomplish. We have golden opportunities offered us through the columns of this paper. Sometimes I fear we do not sufficiently appreciate the blessings of these opportunities of ministering; so often the greatest help we can give others is love and sympathy. I am but a scholar in the school myself, trying to live the life that Christ would have us live. I am anxious to tell some of the cousins how nice their letters were. Maggie Wilson, yours was simply grand; you are not afraid to speak against intemperance, the greatest of all evils. If there were more like you, there would not be so many broken-hearted wives. Wisc. Will Bill, I admire your nerve. You are a true gentleman to come out first of all the young men and say you are a Christian. God bless you. How I wish God had made me such a brother. T. D. Waller, your letter was good, please write again. And oh there are so many others that I enjoyed reading so much. How I should like to meet you all.

LA GRIPPE.

An ache in your back
As you toss in your bed,
An ache in your head
As if it would crack—
That's la grippe.
A taste in your mouth
Like a bitter coat,
A feeling you note
Of lameness and drouth—
That's la grippe.
A burning sensation
That makes your eyes weep,
A struggle to keep
Back a vivid oration—
That's la grippe.

"I am a Christian, and oh how I do love to hear and read of others who are also followers of my dear Saviour. It cheers me on and gives me more courage to face the opposition of the world. I can say to Jeanie that I believe the happiest people are those who are living with the approving smile of God resting upon them. I have traveled for four years in missionary work and seen many converted, and did my health permit I would yet be in the field. I am alone, (yet not alone for Jesus is with me) and can say that He is dearer to me than all friends. I live in what is called the Stone City, a flourishing and aggressive city. Should be glad to have the cousins write to me.
W. A. K., 411 Washington St.,
Joliet, Ill."

"As I have never seen a letter from this place, I am here to ask for admittance in your happy circle of cousins. I will be pleased to give any information about Barbados to any one who will write me, in fact I solicit correspondence with my American cousins. It is one year since I have been taking COMFORT, and I really find it a comfort to look for my paper every month. With kind greetings from this far off place,
I am your nephew, G. E. POYER,
P. O. Box 248, Bridgetown, Barbados, W. I."

"I am a tea agent, 21 years old, and a member of the Y. P. S. C. E. Now having made my bow, I should like to shake hands with every one of you, but can't do it you know. What a rumpus Will Bill did kick up? Got a good talking to in the Oct. No., didn't he? Just what he deserved too. I've met a good many fellows who didn't think much of girls, and all that sort of thing, but those same fellows are so bashful they never get acquainted, and so don't know what they are talking about. People and things are just as you take them. If you growl all the while everyone will look at you cross-eyed, but if you have a pleasant smile and cheery word for persons you meet, you will find a jolly old world and you plump 'in it.' Buckeye Belle, let us not be afraid to do something or say a word for Jesus. Forget-me-not, you write the kind of letter I like to read, full of good strong common sense. Will some of the Western or Southern cousins write to me. May the Lord watch between me and these while we are absent one from another, to meet at last in our home above, is the wish of
WILLIS J. CLARKE, Binghamton, N. Y."

That's it exactly! "People and things are just as you take them." Some one has said that the people we meet are all looking-glasses, just a reflection of ourselves. You cannot bring the best out of a man unless you believe the best is somewhere in him. The world is truly, in a sense, what we make it, and let us try to make it the very pleasantest, cheeriest place possible, both for ourselves and other people.
With best wishes for all,
AUNT MINERVA,
(Care of COMFORT.)

THE GRIP.

A new disease, like a new genius, has to struggle a long time for recognition. Thus, when the now celebrated but justly detested "grip" first made its appearance a few years ago it was regarded in many quarters, as a huge joke. In fact there were many skeptical enough to doubt its very existence. They declared it was a purely imaginary disease. But these were the people who escaped the disease. Those who chanced to fall its victims knew it was a very real disease, or else that they were possessed of unusually active imaginations.

The grip, like all epidemic diseases, manifests a very unchivalric tendency to attack people who are already ill. It seldom fastens itself upon an entirely healthy man. It delights to seize upon systems that are already weakened by disease or overwork. It is a germ disease. These germs exist everywhere in the air, while the disease is prevalent, and are breathed alike by the sick and the well. But a system that is strong and vigorous is usually impregnable against their attacks, while the system that is weak is liable to go down before the first assault.

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A bad cold is the open doorway through which this unwelcome guest frequently enters. Keep this doorway closed by an early use of Oxien. It will cure the symptoms easier than it can the disease and with more comfort to you, but if too late to catch the early symptoms, then take it for the disease and you will be pleased, relieved, cured.

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These words were uttered recently by a gentleman who had the misfortune to break his leg while alighting from a carriage, but a few days before he had allowed his policy to expire in The Provident Fund Accident Society. He actually threw away \$200.00 in cash which he could have had.

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PILLOW SHAM HOLDER. Do not pay 2 or 3 dollars for a pillow sham holder. Mine are in sets of three, nicely nickel plated, with screws complete and directions for putting up. They will last a lifetime. Mailed postpaid to any address for 10c. a set. 1 doz sets 75c. Agents wanted. T. M. GANLEY, Cedarville, Conn.

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STEM-WINDING MUSICAL WATCH. Finely made, silver plated, greatest novelty ever offered. Complete Musical Instrument. Music Box attachment concealed within, plays one of the following tunes:—Home, Sweet Home, Yankee Doodle, Hail Bells of Scotland, Carnival of Venice, Grandfather's Clock, and a Waltz. Entertains both old and young. SPECIAL OFFER. To introduce our Family Magazine, filled with charming stories, we send it 3 months and the Musical Watch and Chain for 50 Cents. Just think of it, a Music Box with gold plated Chain, and a beautiful Magazine 3 months for only 50 cents. Stamps taken. You will be delighted with it. Address SOCIAL VISITOR, BOX 3139, BOSTON, MASS. Please mention COMFORT when you write.

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New Bull's-Eye Dark Lantern. Used by Night Watchmen, Hunters and Farmers, as it throws a powerful light far into the darkness. Can be carried in the hand or attached to belt for skating or hunting. The top revolves so that three colors can be shown: white, red, and green. Just the thing for Farmers. Sent by mail, post-paid, \$5 cents. Send for Free Catalogue of Novelties and Fancy Goods at low prices. MORSE & CO., Augusta, Me.

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Cut this ad. out and send to us and we will send you this beautiful Solid Gold plated watch, by express and if you do not find it equal to any watch retailed at \$25.00 and worth 4 times the price we ask you need not pay one cent, otherwise pay the expressage \$6.00 and the watch is yours. The movement is a full jeweled Elgin style lever, expansion balance, quick train (18,000 beats) with oil tempered Pinion and Hair spring. It is a durable and accurate time keeper. The case is made of composition metal over which is placed 3 plates solid 14k Gold. This watch is fully warranted 3 years. In carrying this watch you have the credit of owning a solid gold watch and for two it just as desirable State which wanted Ladies or Gents also your post and express office. If you send full amount (\$6.00) in order we will send by reg. mail and include a gold-plated chain which you would not get so cheaply the price of watch. KIRTLAND BROS. & CO., 62 Fulton St., N. Y.

A Prize to Every One Who Can Solve This Four-Word Rebus On or Before Saturday, March 26th, 1892.

W B G F U

\$75 IN GOLD for the first correct answer. \$50 for the next five. To the person who sends by mail the LAST CORRECT ANSWER we will give \$75 Cash. To the next to the last \$50 cash. To the next five \$10 each. Besides these cash prizes we will give to EVERY PERSON who sends a correct answer a beautiful copy of THE LIFE OF CHRIST and send it to you all charges prepaid by us. With your answer send 25 cents postal note or silver, or 20 cents postage stamps for postage and advertising expenses. We make this unparalleled offer to introduce this splendid work of art, and to secure canvassers for it at every post-office. You can make an average of \$5 to \$10 a day all winter with it if you contribute to the agency after receiving it. There is "BIG MONEY for YOU" in this. Address H. E. PAUL, Publisher, Owling Building, Chicago, Ill.

A MAGIC LANTERN FREE. WE HAVE DECIDED TO GIVE AWAY 2,000 of these Beautiful Magic Lanterns ABSOLUTELY FREE.

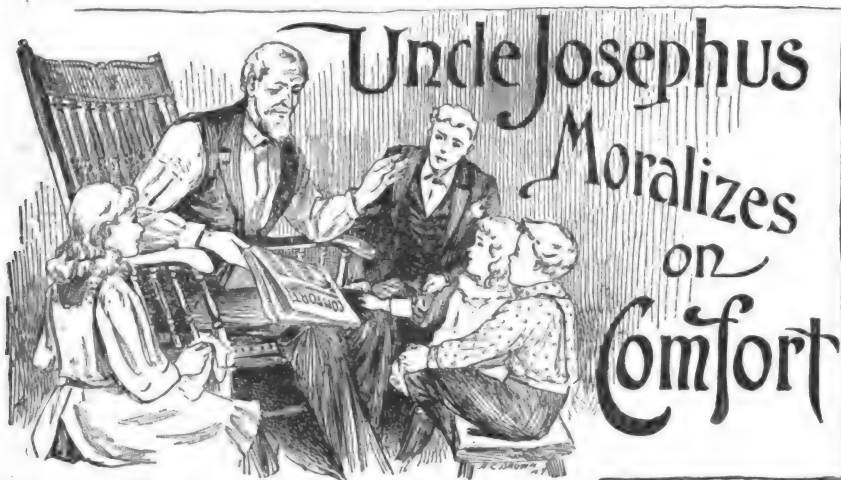
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\$725 IN PRIZES given to the first persons who give the correct answer to the following:

What word in this Advertisement spells every madam and maid, every father and son, to the same backward as Forward? A rare opportunity for every madam and maid, every father and son, to secure one of the following Cash Prizes:

For the First correct answer, cash \$300
To the Second " " " 100
To the Third " " " 75
To the Fourth " " " 50
To each of the next Twenty, \$5.00 each " 100
To each of the next 100, 2.00 each " 200

Total Prizes in Cash, \$725 Answers must reach us on or before April 5th, 1892. With your answer send 25c. postal note or 50c. in stamps, for one quarter's subscription to our 16 page Monthly Paper. Our April issue will announce the result of the contest, with names and addresses of the winners. This offer is made solely to advertise our publication and introduce it into new homes. In addition to the above we shall give away 100 Choice House or Business Lots worth not less than \$10 each. We will promptly give all the prizes offered here. Write your name and address plainly and enclose subscription money to HOME CHEER, 41 Beekman St., N. Y. City.



Uncle Josephus Moralizes on Comfort

THIS is the anniversary month of my return to my accustomed place in Comfort, after an absence of several months, and to say that we have had a pleasant and profitable year together, one which I am certain on my part has been delightful is certainly the case. I can look back at each month's work with you, and feel that I should be sorry to have missed one of the twelve meetings which we have had. I receive daily many letters from the young folks asking me to make our talks more in the conversational style and this month we will try that plan, and I want to hear from all those who have made the request as to how they are pleased with the change. This month then no names or addresses will be used, and each one while reading our department will come upon the answer to his or her questions in some cases unexpectedly. And that leads me to say that quite a number of answers have been received as to the best means of stopping the squeaking in shoe soles, which is caused by the rubbing together of two layers of the same, and my idea is that the most practical way named is to have your shoemaker put in a few pegs of wood around over the surface of the sole which will prevent this friction and the very unpleasant noise accompanying the same, especially when going up the aisle of a church a few minutes late on Sunday morning, as you well know this attracts the attention of all present, and in this connection I must say a few words in regard to making ourselves attractive to others. We must in every way especially by our gentle manners endeavor to make ourselves so pleasing in the sight of our friends that they will always be glad to have us in their presence. An old saying and a good one is "Children should be seen and not heard," as was the case a short time ago. Your Aunt and Uncle were invited out to dinner, and there lives at the home of our friends a little girl who is about ten years old, and a young lady about seventeen, and it was a surprise to both of us to see the beautiful behavior of the younger child, and the very annoying actions and rude manners of the older one. Little Edith used all the pleasant little mannerisms so refreshing to see in young people, while Clara seemed to endeavor to make herself disagreeable, and I for one think she succeeded. As an example, when asked by her mother to go to the dining-room for some fruit, she almost angrily retorted, "I don't want to be a servant, why don't you get it yourself?" How many of my nieces or nephews would have answered MOTHER in that way, for who will you ever find on this broad earth to fill her place? Those ministrations such as can only come from one hand save that of an angel, are not sufficiently appreciated until too late. We can never have but one MOTHER, and we should exert ourselves to strew roses in her path rather than thistles, brushing away the clouds from her sky, and make her life one of sunshine rather than shadow, and in our contact with the outer world, we will find the road much easier to travel, and life's burden much lighter to bear on account of this manner of conducting ourselves. I must try to impress the necessity of adding to your store of knowledge each day, I do not mean that a college education is one of the requisites for a young man or woman, for either may leave school full of honors; they may have the history of the Greeks and Romans at their tongues end, but their education is not complete unless the history of our own time is equally well mastered. What help or pleasure to be able to name all the battles which took place between the Athenians and Spartans, during the Peloponnesian War; or the leaders of many of the Roman conquests, and not be able to tell who commanded the American and English troops at Ticonderoga or Lundys Lane, or who was the first American General to cross the Rocky Mountains, or the date of the departure of Sherman on his march to the sea. Learn to converse of our own times, on the great achievements of our nineteenth century, and in that way make yourselves entertaining, and your conversation agreeable to those who have been less fortunate in the advantages of a classical education.

Have due respect for the poor although you may be rich yourself, remembering that the wheel of time continually revolves and you may be at the bottom some day yourself. And pay as you buy, not going on the theory that owing a debt will be an incentive to more diligent application and greater exertions to earn money to pay it with, for we are apt to think when we have the money on hand that we will spend that for some seemingly needed article, and let our friend who has given us the accommodation, wait a little longer for his money. Never get into arguments with your friends, which are liable to lead to quarrels and unpleasant feelings, but remember always that many persons are like the old Negro who said he "liked to get into a squabble for the sake of Argy," but always when in a company and good principles are being discussed, strenuously maintain them. And by all means never shrink any duty however hard a task it may seem to perform it, and you will have nothing to fear either in this world or the world to come. And I would advise you if you have always leaned on your Father's purse as a support, do it no longer; brace up, earn for yourselves a competence and a reputation which shall ever be a shining star to which you can look and not hesitate to press on in the same direction, as was the case with many of our great men in the past one hundred years, and the old maxim "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again" is applicable here. If you take a step toward being a writer do not be baffled and discouraged and driven out of the race because some modern Daniel shall sit as judge of your manuscript and write unavailably across its fair face. Present it to some other publisher, and follow the round, and if your work has merit it will at last find a place, Daniel De Foe presented the manuscript of "Robinson Crusoe" to nearly every book publisher in London, and it was declined, but at last one more daring than the rest gave it to the world, thereby making a fortune out of it, and also immortality for himself and fame of its author. If you toward the work of

a shorthand writer, do not allow any obstacle, however insurmountable it may seem, to change your course, press steadily and studiously on, and success, that most charming of Goddesses, will meet you halfway up the hill, and will give you a helping hand at every upward step. She is waiting to assist you and your own endeavors will decide how much help she will give you.

According to promise I will now make known the nature of the CONTEST for this month, and for the best answers to the same which shall reach my hands on or before the first day of April, 1892, I will award one of the beautiful new and attractive photograph cameras post paid, which are advertised in January issue of COMFORT. As I said when I first mentioned this contest, all are eligible if subscribers to COMFORT, and I will be pleased to have thousands of letters. Now one and all get out your geography's and write me your choice of a "Route around the World." Take the date of February 1st, 1892, and leave New York at 12 o'clock noon, giving me the lines of steamships and railroads over which you would travel to make the trip, and the number of days required, as also the probable cost of the whole trip, closing with the hour of arrival in New York on the return. Could there be any more pleasant manner in which to pass one of these long winter evenings and certainly a very instructive pastime. Let me hear from you early and the decision shall appear with the copy of the best or Prize letter in the May number of COMFORT. Make the trial for the prize even though you do not win it, for it will help you to burnish up some of the countries of the old world in your memory, and if you do win it will give you an article which will afford you many hours of pleasure in the delightful summer days so soon to come, and you can undoubtedly with your camera for a sample sell a large number of them, thereby making a good profit.

Here I present a picture of little Polly who is sitting before me on the cricket with her brother



POLLY'S PICTURE.

They tell me this is Polly;
Well, well—I do declare!
It does resemble Polly's eyes
And here's her curly hair.
The nose is shaped a little bit
Like Polly's, I confess;
And just as sure as anything
This looks like Polly's dress.
But after all it can't be true,
(Unless the child is ill),
For who, I pray thee, ever saw
Our Polly sitting still?

I have ascertained from the Editor that back numbers of COMFORT can be supplied by Morse & Co. the publishers, as far as March number 1891. The issue for several months before that being entirely exhausted. The beautiful and intensely interesting story, "Which was Which," began in the April number 1891, and if you desire the complete story send 25c. to Morse & Co. and they will send you all the numbers containing this remarkable record of travel in foreign lands, and you can cut it out of the papers and paste it in your scrap books, thereby securing the complete story almost the same as in book form. And now all those who do not keep a scrap book, my advice is, begin at once, and into it paste every item which you feel now will afford you pleasure or amusement in after years. A book of this kind begun by my mother many years ago, is a continual fountain of pleasure to me now.

A few words here as to valentines. Don't be silly with them. Don't spit out your personal spite with one of them, as there is nothing as low as an anonymous letter except a comic valentine, do not lower yourself in your own estimation to the extent of sending one of these cruel shafts in the dark. Be a man or woman and if you have had a misunderstanding with anyone, go to them kindly and ask or give an explanation and see for once how much more noble you will feel when you meet that person ever afterward. The custom of sending nice valentines is growing and I am glad to see it and will mention in this connection that Morse & Co., Augusta, Me., make an offer of a magnificent lot of valentines in another column of this issue of COMFORT and you will all do well to send for an assorted lot. And now again calling your attention to the "Round the World" contest, and making the request of one and all to enter the list, trusting that all have had a prosperous and pleasant winter, and that each one will take up life's outside cares with renewed vigor upon the opening of the beautiful spring so close at hand. I will ask you to continue your intimacy with this department through the mail and remain your loving,

UNCLE JOSEPHUS, (Care of COMFORT.)

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."



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Some people make idols out of old-fashioned remedies, and by their use subject themselves to sacrifice and even torture. But

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are praised all over the world as they are a painless and effectual remedy for all Bilious Disorders arising from Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Constipation, Disordered Liver, and Sick Headache. They have no equal.

Of all druggists. Price 25 cents a box. New York Depot, 365 Canal St.

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Be Your Own Architect.

This book will save you hundreds of dollars. If you are thinking of building a house you ought to buy the new book, PALLISER'S AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE; or, Every Man a Complete Builder, prepared by Palliser, Palliser & Co., the well-known Architects. There is not a Builder, or anyone intending to build or otherwise interested, that can afford to be without it. It is a practical work, and the best, cheapest and most popular book ever issued on Building. Nearly four hundred drawings. A \$5.00 book in size and style, but we have determined to make it meet the popular demand, to suit the times.

It contains 104 pages, 11 x 14 inches in size, and consists of large 9 x 12 plate pages, giving plans, elevations, perspective views, descriptions, owners' names, actual cost of construction, no guess work, and instructions HOW TO BUILD 70 Cottages, Villas, Double Houses, Brick Block Houses, suitable for city suburbs, town and country, houses for the farm, and working-men's homes for all sections of the country, and costing from \$800 to \$6,500; also Barns, Stables, School House, Town Hall, Churches, and other public buildings, together with specifications, form of contract, and a large amount of information on the erection of buildings, selection of site, employment of Architects. It is worth \$5.00 to anyone, but we will send it in paper cover by mail, postpaid, on receipt of \$1.00; bound in cloth, \$2.00. Address all orders to

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The Curse of the Chessmeres.

A STRANGE STORY.

When I was a young girl of nineteen, just verging into womanhood, a misfortune befel me which in one sad hour changed the whole course of my life and transformed me from a pampered child of fortune with servants to fulfill my every wish, to a penniless pauper, obliged to toil for my daily bread.

My father was a retired merchant, who after amassing a handsome fortune, had settled down to enjoy it quietly. We had a splendid home and lived happily until that terrible blow came. My poor parent, who could not tear himself away from that bane of mercantile life—speculation, was induced to invest his entire fortune in a silver mine, which like all such, promised fabulous returns.

But it proved absolutely worthless, as such things often do, and every dollar was gone as if thrown into the sea. We were ruined, for our happy home had to be sold to meet obligations arising out of the ill-fated venture, and we were practically without a roof to cover our heads. Nor was this all. My father, crazed by the disaster his foolishness had brought upon him and his loved ones, committed suicide, and my poor mother followed him shortly after, of a broken heart, leaving me to battle with the world as best I could. Ah! what a sad time that was for me! Picture to yourself the spectacle of a young girl left alone under these deplorable circumstances. To add to my sorrow, friends and acquaintances who were glad and proud of my friendship in the days of my prosperity shunned and forsook me in the hour of my trouble and gave me but little help. Ah! me, 'tis the way of the world; wealth and position, not self and worth are the things valued and respected in this world as I learned in the severe school of experience. I, at length, was lucky enough to secure a position in a gentleman's family as governess, a post for which I was well-fitted, having received an excellent education, and being a fine musician.

The gentleman, Mr. Randall Chessmere, lived with his wife and three children in a beautiful country mansion four miles from the metropolis. He was very wealthy and a more luxurious home than Oak Hall—such was the name of his estate—I never set foot in. All that taste could suggest and money buy went to furnish the mansion, which resembled an eastern monarch's palace, with heavy Persian carpets, magnificent pictures, and rare articles of vertu on every side. The house stood in its own grounds, and was embowered in huge oak trees from which the place took its name.

The family knew of my sad circumstances and had great sympathy for me, and treated me very kindly, more as if I was a guest rather than a servant. My duties were light and pleasant, being to teach the three children of my employers, two girls and a boy, bright, lovable little people, whom it was a pleasure rather than a task to instruct. They gave me no trouble whatever and we spent many a happy day together in the nursery. Thus the time passed until our little family circle was increased by a new arrival. This was Royal Chessmere, my employer's brother, who after a prolonged tour abroad, had now returned to make his home under his brother's hospitable roof until he should marry and set up an establishment of his own. A very welcome addition he proved, for he was a merry-tempered, handsome young fellow of about thirty, who banished every feeling of gloom by his delightful stories and descriptions of things and places he had seen in his travels.

Many a delightful evening did we spend in the winter time clustered about the large open fireplace in the parlor of Oak Hall, where the roddy firelight threw a red glow on our faces which were turned eagerly towards Royal, who was amusing us with his bright stories and anecdotes. I must confess I was greatly interested in Royal Chessmere and studied him a great deal, and though he always gave the appearance of a merry, light-hearted man, who had not a care in the world to trouble him, yet, at times, I noticed him pensive enough, and with a grave, not to say troubled, expression on his face.

This surprised and puzzled me not a little and I asked myself the question: Did Royal Chessmere have a trouble or a secret which nobody else knew? Alas! I was destined to discover that he indeed had, and one of the greatest and most mysterious troubles man ever knew. I liked and admired him very much and he was very kind to me. Naturally, we were thrown much in each other's way, and though he was always kind and courteous to me, I never dreamed that he would ever feel for me a warmer feeling than admiration and respect.

Therefore, imagine my astonishment when several months later Royal Chessmere made me a proposal of marriage! I was alone in the nursery at the time looking over the children's copy-books, and it was a favorable opportunity for Royal, who had probably been awaiting such a chance, to declare his passion. Of course, I accepted him, as I loved him as much as he loved me, and we were married a year after.

We had a merry wedding, for my employer now relative, would not hear of a quiet marriage such as Royal and I desired, and they gave a grand supper and reception to their neighboring friends and acquaintances in our honor. It was a memorable and happy event for me, but I was tired enough when the last speech had been spoken and toast drunk, and our guests had departed. So, after bidding Mr. and Mrs. Chessmere good night, my husband and I sought our bed-chamber at once.

I was so tired I could hardly keep my eyes open and dozing at once got into bed, falling into a sound slumber almost immediately. The last thing I remember ere I was bound fast in slumber's chain was gazing through my half-closed eye-lids and seeing my husband seated near the fire, leisurely divesting himself of his garments and looking at me with a strange, sorrowful look.

How long I slept I could not tell, but I awoke with a peculiar feeling of dread oppressing me—dread of I know not what. The room was plunged in gloom except for a partial illumination made by the fire in the grate, which was now fast dying out in a mass of dark red embers and faintly lighting the room with a ruddy glow. My husband was lying beside me, but his slumber seemed unnaturally profound. He was so still that I could not even hear him breathe.

But thinking him like myself tired after the events of the day and sleeping unusually sound after that I paid no more attention to him and fell asleep again. When I awoke again it seemed as if my slumber had been very brief. The fire was entirely out and the room as dark as the tomb. But I could see my husband sleeping beside me as still as before, and he seemed to be pale and rigid, looking with the white bed clothes around him, I thought with a feeling of terror, exactly like a corpse laid out in the ceremonies of the grave. I was nervous and to awake Royal and end this painful experience I called him by name.

"Royal, are you well?" Awake.

He did not stir in the least. I called him again and again and shook him to awaken him, but he neither moved nor spoke, and I was amazed to find that when I touched him he was as cold as marble.

Now thoroughly surprised and alarmed I

sprang on the floor, and groping to the mantel-shelf, struck a match and lit the gas, allowing a flood of light to illuminate every nook and corner of the apartment, glancing as I did so at the clock. It was ten minutes to one.

Then I rushed to the bed I had just quitted, and throwing aside the bed clothes, looked at my husband. Never to my dying day will I forget the terrible sight I saw. My husband was lying in the bed, rigid as a corpse and the hue of death on his face, his eyes wide open and gazing in horror up into mine.

"He is dead!" I wailed in anguish and swooned dead away.

When I recovered my senses, to my bewilderment I found myself in my husband's arms and felt his kisses upon my lips.

"Oh! Royal," I exclaimed, "God be praised. You are alive after all and I was only dreaming."

"Alas!" he said, with a sob, "you were not dreaming, my darling; would to God that you had been."

And then Royal Chessmere told me the strangest story man's lips ever uttered. It appeared that he was the victim of a strange disease resembling catalepsy which seized him at periodic intervals about once a month and when he least expected to be attacked. This ailment was not at all painful only strange and unnatural and seized him as sudden as a lightning-stroke, and while it lasted, which was only for a quarter of an hour, transformed him to all intents and purposes into a corpse. His strength would leave him and he would grow as rigid as iron, not able to move hand or foot to rouse himself out of the dreadful cataleptic state in which he had found himself. He had his senses throughout all, however, and would be conscious of everything around him; his eyes being open, sight being the only sense left to him. This disease, he said, had been in his family for over a hundred years, and was the curse of the Chessmeres, and one person in each generation was certain to be attacked by it. Legend ascribed this strange ailment to the curse which a gypsy hag had pronounced upon a member of the Chessmeres in the last century, for some injury, real or fancied, which had been done the beldame. No remedy had ever been discovered for this peculiar affliction, which completely baffled medical science. The most eminent physicians had interested themselves in the strange malady and tried to cure it, but all their efforts were abortive and they had to confess themselves defeated. One had given it as his opinion that marriage might correct the trouble, but my husband assured me that he had not married me owing to this idea. For some months prior to his marriage he had not suffered an attack, and he thought from this that the strange disease had gone forever, as an eminent London physician had told him it might in the course of time, but his hopes were blasted when he awoke on his wedding night and found himself in the invisible bonds of the "curse of the Chessmeres." Such was the almost incredible story my husband told me.

"Oh! Mabel, my darling; forgive me," he said, in broken accents, "for the trouble I have unwittingly brought upon you. You have heard my story, and if you wish you can leave me at once. I give you your freedom and shall not hinder you if you take advantage of it."

"No, no, Royal," I sobbed, "I love and pity you from the bottom of my heart and will never leave you."

Years have passed since then and the opinion expressed by the medical men as to the beneficial results of marriage on my husband bid fair to prove true, but as long as I live I will never forget the terror of that awful experience on my wedding night in the bridal-chamber at Oak Hall.

WARD'S INFANT.

Charles Ward was broken-hearted; his sweet young wife was dead, in his passionate anguish he was almost demented, and to his sister's horror, cried:

"It is but a step to the cemetery; what is there to prevent my going there and getting May, and bringing her back in my arms? She is mine; no one has a right to interfere. I can lay her on her bed and kiss her again, and smooth her hair when I like. The house will not be so horribly lonely then!"

"Charles," she exclaimed, breathlessly, "you must go abroad; it will not do for you to stay here. You will lose your mind. I," she hesitated, frowned, "I will take care of the child!"

The faint wail of a week-old infant followed her words.

"I don't think I care much for the child," said the young father, in a hollow voice.

Mrs. Clark made no reply; she was not fond of children herself.

"I will take the babe home with me and you must go to France with Fred."

This arrangement was finally made. Charles Ward went abroad with his sister's stepson, Fred Clark, and she took the child to the Palms, as her country-seat was called.

Everybody seconded Mrs. Clark's advice, and allowing that what everybody approved must be right, Ward made his arrangements for the change in a silent, spiritless way, at the last asking, as if he had hitherto forgotten it, to see the child. The sister brought it; it was very tiny for a fortnight-old baby, looking smaller even than at its birth.

"I don't think it will live," said Ward, in the same hollow, monotonous voice he had used since May died.

Mrs. Clark thoughtfully swathed the baby again in its flannels, perhaps if Charles didn't go away but remained and grew anxious over the child, it would be better for him.

She idolized her brother, was very proud of him. She began to consider that she would have him more to herself, since the pretty young wife of whom she had been jealous was gone. But all arrangements were perfected; they had been made by her counsel, and she held her peace.

In the same black garb in which she attended pretty May's funeral, she descended from the carriage and ascended the terraces of the Palms, the child in her arms.

She was a wealthy widow. The helpless little being she bore into her stately mansion might have been, had she been a different kind of a woman, a boon to her; but she had never had a child, and she didn't love children.

She meant to provide every comfort for this one, however, even relinquishing her own chamber to establish a sunny nursery for the baby, for was it not Charles's child and heirress? A large fortune waited for the tiny creature.

But the tiny babe didn't thrive; it was restless and wailed a great deal, and when it was a month old the nurse said:

"She's at the proper age to take a little notice, Mrs. Clark. Do you see anything the matter with her eyes?"

Something in the woman's tone made the lady look at her very sharply and exclaim:

"Her eyes! Bring her to the light."

She bent over the child, carefully scrutinizing the tiny orbs.

"Why," she said slowly, "there seems a shadow, a film over her eyes. They are not as dark as I thought. What is the matter?"

"I'm fearing ma'am," said the nurse, with feeling, "that there's cataracts coming over the eyes."

Mrs. Clark sprang back, a look of aversion upon her features.

"Oh horrors! she will be a fright, a monstrosity!"

"It's a great affliction, surely; but perhaps a doctor can cure her."

Mrs. Clark left the nursery. But every day she came several times and looked at the baby. She had a letter from his father. The sea voyage had benefited his health. He had been warmly welcomed by many people; he would probably remain abroad several years.

The child's countenance was growing unsightly as the film thickened over its eyes. There could be no doubt that it was a case of cataract; it didn't need a doctor to confirm what was evident to the most casual observer.

Mrs. Clark was shocked and passionately rebellious against this unlooked-for affliction. She had been a Ward, and the Wards had all been noted for their beauty.

She had expected that Charlie's child would inherit the family comeliness and grace. Instead, why, she would be hideous!

Mrs. Clark had heard of people having this deformity removed; but it most generally returns. Had not the eyes always an unpleasant expression. And babe was such an unpeppery, ailing creature. Better it were dead, she declared.

She had a second letter from Charlie, and this time he asked for special tidings of the child. She wrote him it was ill.

She seldom went to the nursery now. Her baby cried constantly, as if it knew and rebelled against its fate.

Mrs. Clark fancied she heard it when she could not in her distant apartments. The infant became a nightmare to her. She didn't try to conceal from herself that she hoped it would die.

She brooded over the matter day and night. Her brain became overcharged. Charlie might marry again and have beautiful children. This one should not inherit the vast Ward fortune. It is worse,—mere weakness and folly—to allow an accident of birth to, vampire like, suck all the happiness from her brother's life. The child was not ill enough to die. It would live and gain a hold in the world, and this must be prevented before too late.

One morning Mrs. Clark entered the nursery. "Get the child ready as soon as you can," she said to the nurse. "I am going to take it into the country to board, where it will do better."

She was already partly dressed for traveling and in an hour took the baby away.

In two days she returned home, and wrote to her brother that the air of the Palms not agreeing with his child, she had sent it to the seaside to nurse.

Mrs. Clark supped luxuriously that night, and while she slept, Patrolman King, following a faint wailing, descended an area in a dark and narrow street of Albany, stumbled over a basket.

"A kid, by gingo!"

The captain of the police station was very busy with his telegraph despatches when King entered, but he looked up at the faint, quivering cry which proceeded from the patrolman's basket. "Another," he said.

"This one is blind," answered the man in a low voice.

He uncovered the basket, and the portly captain rose and looked over the railing of his table at the pitiful atom turning its sightless orbs from side to side, and seeking nourishment with gaping mouth and weak cries. Nothing living could have been more helpless and miserable.

"It's nigh about dead with cold," said King. "Umph! give it to the matron. Take it to the hospital in the morning if it is alive."

Captain Hurd was not a talking man, but an expression of sadness passed briefly over his iron face.

There was a sick woman and a stray child in the matron's room. The latter was a large, fair woman with a quiet face.

"What have you there, a foundling?"

King nodded.

She took the basket and raised the child. "A blind baby, and only a few weeks old! Left in a basement this chilly night? Well, there are some nice people in this world."

"Isn't liked enough for anyone to want you, you see," said King, lingering to see the wail laid on the matron's lap before the fire, and tiny hands covered with her own warm palms. "I'll just step into the kitchen and see that Jim gets some hot milk directly. Shall I?"

"Yes."

The sick woman who lay on the settee lifted her head from the pillow.

"No mother ever did that," she said.

"I don't know," said the matron. "There are strange women as well as men."

In the morning the babe was living and was taken to the hospital.

Fate has strange chances.

When Charles Ward returned from Europe he didn't, as Mrs. Clark expected, look about him for a second wife. The one woman he had loved was dead.

The letter from his sister, bearing tidings that his child was dead, was an old one when he again entered his home. It was not strange, he knew, that a motherless infant should die; but the sad news had given him a pang. And then he believed that he had worn suffering out.

For the next fifteen years he devoted himself to business and amassed a large fortune.

About eight years after his return, he was urged to become one of the directors of an orphan asylum.

Among the destitute children brought in was a little girl, very frail and sensitive. But he thought her very beautiful, and to Mrs. Clark's intense displeasure adopted her.

"Who is she?" she asked coldly.

"She has been a friendless waif with an unknown history. She is now my daughter. She is one of the few children I can love. I see no reason why I should deny myself the pleasure of cherishing her." Ward replied rather sternly, for his relations with his sister were not of late always harmonious.

"I know the secret of your taking such a step. The child looks like May," she replied with a severe glance.

He forgot, in his pleasure, to resent her words.

"Do you see it?"

"I thought so. May shall be her name," and he took the little girl between his knees and kissed her.

Henceforth his defrauded heart overflowed upon the child. She grew up a modest, sweet violet of a girl, utterly unspoiled by indulgence and luxury. But Mrs. Clark never liked her for growing more and more to look like the mother of the cruelly abandoned baby.

Mrs. Clark had strictly justified herself in taking this extreme step; but her hair was gray and she had aged in appearances greatly. For she was a young woman when her brother's wife died.

Her stepson had married; her husband had lost his money and died, and she was installed the mistress of her brother's home when May was adopted. The latter could not like her, but she delighted her father.

She loved young Dr. Glen, too. And why not, since he was her lover, and as fine and ardent a young fellow as could well be. Ward approved the union and the young girl's life was very bright and beautiful.

Then came a catastrophe and all the horrors of sudden death. Charles Ward was thrown from his carriage and killed.

No will could be found.

Mrs. Clark put in a claim for the whole of her brother's property, and, by the aid of nu-

scrupulous lawyers, seemed likely to get it."

"An adopted child does not inherit unless by a special provision," she said boldly to May.

The young girl was bitterly grieved.

"Papa didn't intend it so. He loved me. He would not leave me penniless," she declared.

"I can give you a good home, my darling, not quite so luxurious as this, but with all comforts," said young Dr. Glen.

"It is not that. Papa is wronged. He meant this house, which sheltered my childish head to be my home as long as I lived. He has often told me so."

Mrs. Clark's conduct was insufferable. At every turn she insulted May, called her an intruder, a beggar, an outcast, whom her brother had benevolently harbored.

The poor girl was wild with pain; but she kept the worst of her suffering from her lover.

One day he entered the house and begged to take May out.

"I don't care to drive."

"But I have a purpose."

She yielded, and they went to the consumptives' home.

An emaciated woman, stretched on one of the little cots, took and held May's hand.

"Miss Ward, I know about your trouble, and I am going to help you. Mrs. Clark was my enemy. My husband deserted me; he was a graceless fellow, but I loved him."

"I took service with Mrs. Clark, but she turned me and my baby out of her house. I had no friends, and I wandered about the streets until I fainted for want of food, and was taken to the police station where the matron helped and consoled me. But my little babe died."

"While I was at the station, an abandoned babe—blind—was brought in. The matron examined its clothing for some mark of identity. She found none."

"But I was more fortunate, a handkerchief had been accidentally dropped in the basket which I recognized. I had laundered it at Mrs. Clark's house, it bore her initials. I kept it."

"I kept track of you. I knew your blindness was removed at the hospital. You went to an orphan asylum after another, until, to my joy, Mr. Charles Ward adopted you. Why, child, he is your own father."

"I have traced out all the story. Here are papers which will prove it at every point, and that cold and wicked woman will not triumph. I have made it my study for years to defeat her, and I have done it. And now I do not dread to die, for I shall see my child her cruelty killed."

The woman's name was Clara Jaynes.

Dr. Glen's father, a noted physician, had known her for years, and her proofs of the story she told had been prepared with a care that showed her to be an uncommonly shrewd woman. Her wrongs had made her revengeful to a good purpose, for, to May's joy, her statements were found undeniable even by Mrs. Clark's most skillful attorneys.

The latter went into obscurity, where her meditations probably accompanied her, and prevented from enjoying the happiness of the good and just.

May succeeded to her father's beautiful house, where she was very happy, feeling that such had been her wish.

When it came out that Dr. Glen's father had operated upon her eyes in infancy, and been the instrument of restoring her sight and beauty, it was an added source of joy to both her and her young husband.

Georgie Misunderstood.

Rochester "Herald": A lady went not long since to call upon a neighbor in the country, says the Boston "Courier," and found the 8-year-old son of the house playing upon the lawn.

"How do you do, Georgie?" she said. "Is your mamma at home?"

"No, Mrs. Gray," he answered with the most approved politeness.

"I am sorry for that," the caller said. "Will she be gone long?"

"I don't know," the little fellow answered, doubtfully. "She's gone to a Christian and Devil meeting."

"Gone to what?" the lady exclaimed in astonishment.

"To a Christian and Devil meeting in the vestry," was the reply.

And it suddenly flashed across the caller's remembrance that for that afternoon had been appointed at the vestry of the church a meeting of the society of Christian Endeavor.

Tack It on the Wall.

The elder Baron Rothschild had the walls of his bank placarded with the following curious maxims:

Carefully examine every detail of your business.

Be prompt in everything.

Take time to consider and then decide quickly.

Dare to go forward.

Bear troubles patiently.

Be brave in the struggle of life.

Maintain your integrity as a sacred thing.

Never tell business lies.

Make no useless acquaintances.

Never try to appear something more than you are.

Pay your debts promptly.

Learn how to risk your money at the right moment.

Shun strong liquor.

Then work hard and you will be certain to succeed.

A Lesson in Deportment.

"Madam," he began, as the door opened, "I am selling a new book on etiquette and deportment."

"Oh, you are!" she responded. "Go down there on the grass and clean the mud off your feet."

"Yes'm. As I was saying, ma'am, I am sell—"

"Take off your hat! Never address a strange lady at her door without removing your hat."

"Yes'm. Now then as I was saying—"

"Take your hands out of your pockets! No gentleman ever carries his hands there."

"Yes'm. Now, ma'am, this work on etl—"

"Throw out your cud. If a gentleman uses tobacco, he is careful not to disgust others by the habit."

"Yes'm. Now, ma'am, in calling your attention to this valuable—"

"Wait! Put that dirty handkerchief out of sight and use less grease on your hair. Now you look half way decent. You have a book on etiquette and deportment. Very well. I don't want it. I am only the hired girl. You can come in, however, and talk with the lady of the house. She called me a liar this morning, and I think she needs something of the kind"—*Trois Free Press.*

He Was Fly.

"And I suppose, like a brave soldier, you followed your colors?"

"Yes whenever there was a battle I noticed that the colors were flying, so I flew too."



DEAR MYSTIC FRIENDS:
Come, let us have a jolly good time this month, around the fireplace in "The Mystic Castle," where the flames of Puzzledom burst forth with a cheerful and glowing splendor. Have you never been with us before? Has COMFORT, with its many blessings, just entered your home?

If so, you certainly want to enjoy the pleasures we enjoy each month, tangling and untangling the "Intricate Knots from Puzzledom," working for the fine useful prizes offered, and having a social chat as we gather at the "Realm of Comfort."

Welcome to all, especially to those who have lately joined us, and to those who come seeking admittance to "The Mystic Castle" this time.

Send original puzzles for publication, solutions to the "Mysteries" below, and all your letters concerning "The Mystic Castle" to Oldcastle, Comfort, Utica, N. Y. Be sure to sign your full name and address, as well as *nom de plume* to every letter you write, also attach it to each puzzle you send.

Oldcastle will answer all letters received from his Mystic Friends, if a two-cent stamp is inclosed.

Solvers! Have you seen the announcement of the "Gold Medal Tournament" in our last issue? A fine gold medal, suitably engraved and inscribed, is to be given to the solver making the best record from Jan. 1 to July 1892. For further particulars relating to this contest, see January "Mystic Castle."

Oldcastle has received Ophir's and Delian's photographs for his album. Many thanks to you, Mystic Friends, for them. Hope many more will follow suit. Danville Solver will hereafter be known as Percy Vere; Cal I. Poria as Ned Land; W. H. S. as R. E. Ward; Line as Essay; Buck I. Ned as R. E. Turn; Phil O. Pena as Bessie Factor.

Now for a little miscellaneous chat. Novice sent a list of solutions to October "Mysteries" too late to be credited in our last issue. Solvers will please date their lists of solutions. The names of the winners in the "Prize Word-Hunt Contest" will be announced next month. Please do not write with lead pencil.

Contributions have been received from Novice, 16; Bessie Factor, 14; Wild Bill, Jr., 5; James Brooks, 4; Odell Cyclone, Kernel, R. E. Ward, Remardo and Merlin, 3; Ajax, R. Ebus, Southern Girl, (New Orleans, La.), Ned Land and Aspiro, 2; Bula Dillingham, 1.

Solvers to November "Mysteries" are as follows:

Complete Lists:—Doe, Eglantine, S. N. Dills, Frank, Ophir, Kal G. Lator and Hercules.

Incomplete Lists:—Pancy, R. H. Reddish, Ypsie, Essay, Mrs. G. P. C. and W. E. Wiatt, 11; Castranova, Roland, Ben Net and Audax, 10; Delian and Wild Bill, Jr., 9; Remardo, 8; Guardianer, Southern Girl, (New Orleans, La.), and Phil, 7; Solon, Rosebug, Pat Riot and Novice, 6; Mrs. C. C. Haskell, Chinkapin Ridge, Odell Cyclone, Florine, Philos, H. A. Watha and Buck I. Solver, 5; Pro Fesh, Miss Josie and Daisy Bourjal, Percy Vere, Noah Count and Arty Fishel, 4; Con T. Emplate, Ned Land, Ajax, Mrs. Fanny White, Hamlin, Bill Arp, O. B. Server and Sis, 3; Maj. Mrs. W. E. Jaegle, Bula Dillingham and Dick Graver, 2; Jersey Lilly, 1.

Prize-winners:—1. Doe. 2. Eglantine. 3. S. N. Dills.

Solvers should endeavor to enter their lists as early as possible, as the time of receipt, as well as the correctness, is taken into consideration in awarding the prizes.

If contributors desire to offer individual prizes for the solution to their puzzles, they may do so, by simply making notice of the offer on the sheet containing the puzzle. Contributors so doing will be notified of the winner's name and address, when the prizes are awarded, and will confer a favor by sending the prize as soon after receiving the notification as possible.

We have chatted quite a little this month and it has come time for the old man of Mystic Land to return to his old home to await the coming of another month when he hopes to be again permitted to enjoy a pleasant visit with his Mystic Friends at the "Realm of Comfort." So good-bye for this time, with the best wishes of
Your dear old Mystic Friend,
OLDCASTLE.

SOLUTIONS TO NOVEMBER'S MYSTERIES.

No. 237. Light-house.

No. 238. Rib-bed.

No. 239.

NOTES

PPATE

IRATE

STONE

ENDOW

DELVE

SEE

Q

QUE

PRONED

CHODL

ENLIVEN

DEBEL

T

No. 241.

BUR

PARED

BATTLES

CURTAILED

RELIEVE

DELVE

SEE

Q

No. 242.

COD

SALAD

CALDRON

GOLDENROD

DARNING

DORNS

NOG

D

No. 243.

QUE

PRONED

CHODL

ENLIVEN

DEBEL

T

No. 244.

H P

TOGAS

HONORED

ZYGOMATIC

PARAGON

SETON

DIN

No. 245.

BAC

CERAM

CALAMUS

BELESPRIT

MARASCHINES

CAMPURINES

SINES

TOS

No. 246.

LH

TACUS

THRUSTS

PARUSTIANS

CRUSTIANS

HESTIATES

STARTERS

SNEER

S

No. 247.

STRONG

OLLERS

DIGITS

OUTACT

STRAIT

VERNE

No. 248.

R-EBUF

O-RMOLU

B-OREAL

E-XHORT

R-ERCHO

T-ARTAN

MYSTERIES.

No. 281. Numerical.

The whole, composed of twenty-three letters, is the name of a noted writer.

The 8, 21, 10, 16, 3, 11, 23 is a law term meaning support.

The 4, 17, 6, 13, 22, 10, 15 is a mixture of different kinds of grain.

The 12, 14, 19, 1 is a disease that is paroxysmal.

The 9, 20, 18, 18, 5 is a berry.

The 7 and 2 are found in "The Mystic Band."

Kansas City, Mo., BENNIE FACTOR.

No. 284. Crossword.

In Bagdad for my first I look;

From Omaha the next I took;

The third in Russia can be found,

And fourth's in Kansas, I'll be bound.

The fifth's in Egypt, and I find

The sixth in Portugal, now mind

That a basket whole will surely be,

Make sure that whole you plainly see.

Gouldsboro Sta., Pa., ARTHUR.

No. 285. Double Letter Enigma.

In "golden treasure;"

In "love without measure;"

In "lovely and fair;"

In "golden hair."

Perhaps you'll guess it,

When you see

My whole, is good

For you and me.

Marshfield, Pa., R. EBUS.

No. 286. Apheris.

When the signal of war resounds o'er the land,

The TOTAL soon spreads from hilltop to sea,

And patriots together in serried ranks stand,

To battle for home and dear liberty.

Great Britain once tried to grind us to dust,

And mustered her minions on land and on sea,

But we put in our God and our muskets our trust,

And down in mid ocean went her ship-load of tea,

And up sprang the nation from tyranny free.

Now wide o'er the land our millions are spread,

They till the rich soil that yields them their bread;

Dame Nature is kind, and her plants of bright green,

Of use to mankind, are everywhere seen;

With fair, scented flowers the senses they please;

And houses for shelter man makes of the trees;

The waste places even with verdure are fair,

And FINAL, says Webster, is a plant that grows there.

Dubois, Ill., ASPIRO.

No. 287. Beheadment.

Whole, I mean to irritate; behead me and have de-

gree; behead me again and I mean devoured; trans-

pose me and have to rust; behead, and I am a pre-

position; again, and I am a letter from "Old Castle."

Mendocino City, Cal., NED LAND.

No. 289. Square.

1. A prose writer. 2. Distance. 3. A kind of pan-

cake. 4. A hot, oppressive wind common in the

Mediterranean Sea. 5. One who makes equal. 6. To

curve back.

Embsen, Me., GUY.

No. 292. Pentagon.

1. A letter. 2. A particle. 3. Not easily discovered.

4. Marked with dots, circles, etc. 5. Having belts

surrounded by rings. 6. English novelist (1840-7).

7. A fine spirituous liquor. 8. To bring to the consider-

ation of. 9. The substances which inclose the ore on

every side.

Belton, Texas, G. WHIZZ.

No. 293. Diamond.

1. A letter. 2. A small vessel. 3. Subterranean

cavities or passages. 4. Revolved around. 5. A

weeding out (obs.). 6. Throwing. 7. A net. 8. An

animal. 9. A letter.

Bennett, N. Br., ROLAND.

PRIZES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS.

1. Two fine twenty-five cent books are offered by

Remardo for the best double six letter square, i.e.

reading downward differently than across.

2. As Doc already has a copy of "Payne's Business

Pointers," he offers the copy won by him in a recent

contest for the best batch of "flats," received before

April 1, 1892. Mark puzzles ("In Competition," and

address Oldcastle, Comfort, Utica, N. Y. If you wish

to be notified by mail of the receipt of your letters,

inclose a two-cent stamp.

PRIZES FOR SOLUTIONS.

1. For the first complete or largest lists of solutions

to this month's "Mysteries," Webster's Handy Dic-

tionary.

2. For the second best list, a year's subscription to

COMFORT.

3. For the first complete list of solutions to the

"flats" in this issue, three Silk Handkerchiefs.

4. For the first complete list of solutions to the

"forms," Carl's Treasure Cabinet.

Competition closes April 1, 1892. Solutions, solvers

and prize-winners will appear in May "Mystic

Castle."

HAVE YOU CATARRH.

There is one remedy you can try without

danger of humbug. Send to H. G. Colman,

Chemist, Kalamazoo, Mich., for trial package

of his Cure. Postage 4 cents. Test and judge

for yourself. Mention this paper.

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Learned by note in 1 hour. Large Chart

(14x22) for Piano or Organ, 5 lessons, 10c.

U. S. Music Co., 69 Dearborn St., Chicago.

BICYCLES

All makes. Easy Payments. ROUSE

HAZARD & CO., 161 G. St. Peoria, Ill.

PHOTOS

Sample, 20 New Styles 2c. stamp.

World Pub. Co., Box 7 Passumpsic, Vt.

NERVOUS

Troubles HOWEVER CAUSED per-

manently cured. Home treatment

Prescription free. Address, J. E. KENO, Washington, D. C.

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Silk and Satin Remnants. Our stock is Crown Edge,

Great Grain, Moore Satin Edge, Silk Brocade, etc.

Beautiful Goods. Yard to three yards in length.

Large pkg. 33c. Two for 60c. RIBBON CO., Box 10, Augusta, Me.

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New, Certain Cure.

Trial package free.

F. R. STUART,

Marshall, Mich.

Fish Nets

At factory prices. Seines, \$1.38

and up. Send for catalogue

quick and save money.

CHAS. B. PROUTY & CO., 634 & 65 Washington St., Chicago.

A BEAU

tiful neck, face and arms. Don't pay 50c., but

send 10c. for sealed package, to make your skin

soft and white, or cure pimples, freckles, moth, wrinkles,

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FREE

Six Solid Sterling Silver Co's Tea-

spoons. Write at once and secure this

elegant present. GARDEN CITY MFG CO.

No. 173 Monroe St., Chicago, Ill.

LADY AGENTS

If you want goods that sell

quickest, pays largest profits

and gives best satisfac-

tion write quick to the manufacturers. Catalogue free.

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QUILT PATTERNS

Three beautiful new

One doz. 25c. all different, sent by re-

turn mail with catalogue of specialties.

LEAP YEAR THOUGHTS.



A cynical old bachelor said to me the other day: "There are several things which you can never get a lady, be she young or old, to confess to. Here are some of them: That she laces tight; that her shoes are too small for her; that she is ever tired at a ball; that she paints; that she is as old as she looks; that she has been more than five minutes dressing; that she kept you waiting; that she blushed when a certain person's name was mentioned; that she ever says a thing that she does not mean; that she is fond of scandal; that she cannot keep a secret; that she—she of all persons in the world—is in love; that she does not want a new bonnet; that she can do with a single thing less when she is about to travel; that she has not the disposition of a saint—or how could she go through one-half of what she does? That she does not know better than every one else what is good for her; that she is a flirt or a coquette; that she is ever in the wrong."

Evidently St. Valentine's day to him has been one of successive disasters.

Another woman who is able to do pretty well without the aid of a husband has this to say: "Young girls, wait until you are at least twenty-five before you think of marrying! All tastes change between the ages of sixteen and thirty. The books you read, the games you enjoy, the milliner's skill you trust to, the friendships you cultivate, all are changing; why should not the tastes and fancies of the soul? The age that feeds upon Mrs. Southworth and Mrs. Holmes is vastly unlike the age that demands stronger mental food. The hero you are ready to worship at eighteen will not be a hero to you, ten chances to one, at twenty-eight. Wait until your tastes settle and the possibilities within you have found their level before you fix upon an unalterable destiny. For, whether it bring sorrow or joy, the choice you make is an irrevocable one. There ought to be a special legislation against hasty and early marriages, for, although there are signal exceptions to the rule, three-fifths of the exceedingly early unions turn out a curse to either or both of the mated ones."



There is however only too much truth in what she says.

Here is a specimen of how the French view the marriage relation. When asked, many years ago, why he did not like to marry, the French working-man answered: "I would marry if I could get a divorce when I thought it necessary." Now that divorce has been introduced, however, the number of marriages has failed to increase and the number of separations grows from year to year. In 1890, the number of marriages in France was 3,502 less than in 1889. In 1881 there were 1,657 divorces to 10,000 marriages; in 1890 there were 5,457 divorces to 10,000 marriages. The day is near at hand when there will be as many divorces as marriages in France.

Yet the Frenchman in his domestic relation is generally as comfortable and happy and as docile as his English or American cousin.

DO YOU WISH TO LEARN TELEGRAPHY?

I will send you 48 page Book of Instructions, Free. Address, J. A. SHERIDAN, Oberlin, Ohio.

TO REMOVE PIMPLES & BLACK-HEADS

Wrinkles, Freckles, yellow or muddy skin, face or form disfigurement. Give you a Lovely Complexion, restores bloom and freshness to you after all else fails. My own beauty discovery after years of trial. Warranted no poisonous waters or liquid. Safe and sure. Pearl purity package, \$1.00, but sent for 25c. to prove as I say, and get Lady Agents to make money for you and me. MISS MARY WILSON, 90, Fifth Ave., New York.



FOUND
In Galveston, T., an old coin worth
\$5,000.
A Boston Baker sold 149 old coins
\$13,389.
We can prove that others have done nearly as well.
Coin Collecting Pays Big
If you have any Old Coins or Proofs coined before 1878, save them, as they might be worth a fortune. Illustrated circulars on rare coins free at office or mailed for two stamps. Agents Wanted Numismatic Bank, Court St., Boston, Mass.

WOODBURY'S FACIAL SOAP
For the Skin, Scalp and Complexion. The result of 50 years' experience. For sale at Druggists or sent by mail, 50c. A Sample Cake and 125 page Book on Dermatology and Beauty, Illustrated, on Skin, Scalp, Nervous and Blood Diseases and their treatment, sent sealed on receipt of 10c. also Disfigurements like Birth Marks, Moles, Warts, India Ink and Powder Marks, Scars, Pimples, Redness of Nose, Superfluous Hair, Pimples, etc., removed.
JOHN H. WOODBURY Dermatological Institute, 125 West 42nd Street, New York City. Consultation free, at office or by letter. Open a.m. to 9 p.m.

Spray Pump Free. Salary Paid Agents. It sprays Trees, Shrubs, Vines, Plants, Lawns, Street, Gardens. Puts out fires, washes wagons, windows, Bails boats, Whitewashes henhouse, Controls swarming bees. Cattle syringe. Used in cotton gins, mills, cooper shops. Throws water 60 feet. Sample free if you send agent. You can send 10c to help pay this ad. We send complete pump, and 3 attachments. If you don't want agency send \$2.00. Circulars free. **A. B. SPIERS, 880, No. Windham, Maine.**
Please mention COMFORT when you write.

IS YOUR T ON THIS? Well, think! Would it be worth THREE DOLLARS to you to become either a first-class book-keeper or a successful business man? You can become either or both of these if you will purchase and master the contents of that remarkably valuable work, entitled "GOODWIN'S IMPROVED BOOK-KEEPING AND BUSINESS MANUAL." 30,436 copies sold; 2,817 testimonials received! "Worth \$500!" says one book-keeper. "What I learned from your book in three weeks cost a friend \$600.00!" says another. "Saved the expense of one man in my office in the past year!" says a business man. **Price \$3.00.** CUT THIS OUT AND SAVE IT, as it will not appear again. It may prove to be your stepping-stone to a fortune! Send for descriptive pamphlet to **J. H. GOODWIN, R 188, 1215, Broadway, New York.**
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CUT THIS OUT AT ONCE AND MAIL IT TO US. We will send you the **FINEST PIANO and ORGAN CATALOGUES** in the world, and show you how to **SAVE \$50 to \$100.**
Musical Instruments for Cash, or upon terms to suit all buyers at astonishingly low prices. Factory capacity ONE THOUSAND ORGANS and PIANOS per month. Correspondence Solicited.
CORNISH & CO., (Old Established) WASHINGTON, and Reliable. New Jersey.
Please mention COMFORT when you write.

FREE EXCURSIONS TO THE WORLD'S FAIR!
1000 CASH PREMIUMS
For 1000 Prizes Max and Women.
THE MUTUAL HOME SYNDICATE will GIVE AWAY, absolutely free, 1000 World's Fair Excursion Tickets, good for the ROUND TRIP from any railroad station in the United States within 1000 miles of Chicago, in any direction, on any railroad, and 1000 Cash Premiums of \$50 each.
The foregoing 1000 Cash Premiums and 1000 World's Fair Excursion Tickets are offered in connection with the most liberal plan of obtaining valuable real estate property, located at the best cities in the United States, ever offered in this or any other country.
The first 1000 applicants who comply with the simple conditions connected with this unparalleled offer will receive the 1000 Fifty-Dollar Premiums and 1000 World's Fair Excursion Tickets. IT COSTS NOTHING TO APPLY. Send your name and address, written plainly, by return mail you will receive a magnificent Panoramic Painting, in beautiful colored oil, representing the Grandest and most wonderful scene of the Fair in May, 1893. The Picture is 30 x 43 inches in size, and is a masterpiece of art, covering more than 100 acres. NO EXPENSE TO YOU, NOT EVEN FOR POSTAGE—we pay that. If your application is among the first 1000 you will be entitled to the full benefits of our Big Cash Premium and Free World's Fair Excursion offer, and the necessary contract to enable you to secure such benefits will be sent with the Picture. If you are too late to be numbered with the first 1000, you will get the Picture anyway.
Address: Mutual Home Syndicate, CINCINNATI, OHIO.

GARFIELD TEA Overcomes results of bad eating; cures Sick Headache; restores Complexion; cures Constipation.
LOVELY NEW VARIEGATED TUBEROSE
The leaves of this grand variety are bordered with creamy white; flowers very large and of exquisite fragrance. Bulbs continue to grow and bloom year after year. It makes a most magnificent plant. It blooms several weeks earlier than the other sorts, which greatly adds to its value. For only 25c. we will send by mail, postpaid, all of the following: 1 bulb of the Lovely New Variegated Tuberose; 1 bulb of the Excelsior Pearl Tuberose; 1 bulb New Seedling Gladioli; 1 bulb Oxalis free bloomers; 1 pkt. Fuller's Perfection Pansy seed; 1 pkt. Snow Queen Pansy seed; 1 pkt. Fuller's Perfection Balm; 1 pkt. Pearl Plant Phlox; 1 pkt. Lovely Margaret Carnation. These rare bulbs and seeds will all flower this season and we send them for only 25c. Order at once. Catalogue sent free.
J. ROSCOE FULLER & CO., Floral Park, N.Y.

SIR HENRY THOMPSON, the most noted physician of England, says that more than half of all diseases come from errors in diet.
Send for Free Sample of Garfield Tea to 319 West 45th Street, New York City.

\$300.00 IN GOLD GIVEN AWAY!
Ten Silk Dresses and 20 Diamond Rings to the Persons Correctly Stating the Number of Dots in this Bottle.
A Few Minutes Work May Make You \$100.00.
Dr. Hobb's Little Vegetable Pills act gently yet promptly on the Liver, Kidneys and Bowels, dispelling Headache, Fevers and Colds, cleansing the system thoroughly and cure habitual constipation. They are sugar coated, do not gripe, very small, and are recommended by leading physicians.
We will give to the first person who tells us by mail the first correct answer, \$100.00 in gold; to the second, \$50.00; to the next five persons, a handsome Silk Dress Pattern of 15 yards, in Black, Blue, Green, Brown or Gray. To the next 10, a Solid Gold Genuine Diamond Ring. To the person from whom we receive the last correct answer, we will give \$100.00 in Gold; to the next, \$50.00; to the next 5, a handsome Silk Dress Pattern in one of the above colors, and to the last 10, a Solid Gold Genuine Diamond Ring. We prepay all shipping charges on presents, and send in accordance with this offer on the same day the answer is received. All answers must be sent by mail. Contest closes with the last regular mail delivered to us March 31st, 1893. Your answer must be accompanied by 25c in silver or 30c in stamps for a vial of DR. HOBBS' LITTLE VEGETABLE PILLS. Pills sent to any address by mail. Immediately after March 31st a printed list giving the names and addresses of the successful contestants will be mailed to each person who has sent in an answer. When you order mention this paper. Address **HOBBS' MEDICINE CO., 555 Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.**
Please mention COMFORT when you write.

TO REMOVE PIMPLES & BLACK-HEADS
Wrinkles, Freckles, yellow or muddy skin, face or form disfigurement. Give you a Lovely Complexion, restores bloom and freshness to you after all else fails. My own beauty discovery after years of trial. Warranted no poisonous waters or liquid. Safe and sure. Pearl purity package, \$1.00, but sent for 25c. to prove as I say, and get Lady Agents to make money for you and me. MISS MARY WILSON, 90, Fifth Ave., New York.

\$500 FOR A TOMATO
Last spring I offered \$500 to any person producing a 4 lb. Mammoth Prize Tomato; T. R. Harris, Abbott, Neb., won it with one weighing 3 lbs. 8 1/2 ozs. and I sent him my check for \$500. It measured over 8 1/2 in. in diameter. 37 tomatoes grew on one stem over 3 feet from the ground. Largest plant on record 13 ft. 6 in. tall. This mammoth strain creates a sensation wherever it goes, and is the largest ever offered. Thousands of my customers have grown them to weigh over 45 ozs. The quality is excellent; after you once test it you will grow no others. If well cared for they will produce 1 bu. to a plant (see cut) of large, smooth, bright red tomatoes, very solid with only a few seeds in each, and entirely free from rot. If started early, fruit ripens from July 4th until frost. This year I offer \$500 Cash to any person producing a 4 1/2 lb. tomato. (It can be done.) Full directions how Mr. Harris grew his with each order. Plant some, you may win the prize. All my seed is saved from large specimens.
SURE HEAD CABBAGE
Is all head and sure to head, very uniform in size, firm and fine in texture, excellent in quality and a good keeper. Single heads have weighed over 64 pounds.
EARLY SNOWBALL TURNIP
Is the earliest in the world, easy grown, good size, excellent quality. Will be far ahead of your neighbors.
My Catalogue, is worth 50 cts. to any one who gets it. \$500 offered largest order; \$500 for a pansy blossom; \$500 for a bean plant with 100 pods, and above tomato prize. I will send a packet each of Prize Tomato, Cabbage and Turnip, with my Catalogue of Bargains for only 25 cents. Greatest bargain catalogue ever sent out.
Every person sending silver for above collection, will receive Free a packet of PRICES IMPROVED EXTRA EARLY FREE TOMATO, and a 50c. certificate for seeds, your choice from my bargain catalogue Free.
F. B. MILLS, Rose Hill, Onondaga Co. N.Y.

THE MORSE OUTFIT, \$3.75.
Complete outfit for learning Telegraphy and operating short telegraph lines. Consists, full size, well made Sounder and Key Set, with Battery. Instruction Book, Wire, and all materials for operating. Sent by express upon receipt of \$3.75 by registered letter, money order, express order or stamps. Illustrated pamphlet of practical instructions, with description of instruments, book to put up Telegraph Lines, Electric Bells, Batteries, etc., free to any address. **J. H. BUNNELL & CO., 76 Cortlandt St., N. Y.** Largest and best Telegraph and Electric Bells Supply House in America.

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INTERPRETED.



HE HELD UP A PENNY TO PAY.

"Well, little boy," said the candy man, "And what will you have to-day?" "Yuppy yate ticky," said Johnnie Moran. And he held up a penny to pay. "Say it once more," said the candy man, "Your meaning is rather obscure." But "Yuppy yate ticky," said Johnnie again, With a smile that was sweet and demure. "Is it this? Is it that?" said the candy man, "Or perhaps it's a peppermint stick? Or a chocolate cream? Come! tell if you can, And try, little boy, to be quick." But Johnnie looked up at the candy man And solemnly shook his head, Then all of a sudden he thought of a plan And took to his heels and fled.



SHE STRAIGHT ADVANCED WITH HER SHOULDERS SQUARE.

But he soon returned, with a confident air, And his sister Elizabeth Ann, Who straight advanced with her shoulders square, Till she stood by the candy man. He was wondering still, as he scratched his nose, What "Yuppy yate ticky" might be, When "Give my brother a cent's worth, please, Of sumpin' taint sticky," said she.

E. L. SYLVESTER

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Is all head and sure to head, very uniform in size, firm and fine in texture, excellent in quality and a good keeper. Single heads have weighed over 64 pounds.
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Every person sending silver for above collection, will receive Free a packet of PRICES IMPROVED EXTRA EARLY FREE TOMATO, and a 50c. certificate for seeds, your choice from my bargain catalogue Free.
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